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Shakespeare's

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

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HL

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वर्ग संख्या.................. प्राप्ति-संख्या...................

ग्रन्थ-कार्ड
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ग्रन्थागार
नरिया, वाराणसी-५

ग्रन्थ नाम.......Merchant of Venice.......

लेखक.......S. C. Sarcar M. A.......

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MERCHANT OF VENICE

EDITED

WITH INTRODUCTION & NOTES

श्री गणेश वर्णी दि. जैन (शोध) संस्थान
पुस्तक सं. 934
विभाग
नरिया, (का.)

BY

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

The Duke of Venice.
The Prince of Morocco, } suitors to Portia.
The Prince of Arragon, }
Antonio, a merchant of Venice.
Bassanio, his friend, suitor likewise to Portia.
Salanio, }
Salarino, } friends to Antonio and Bassanio.
Gratiano, }
Lorenzo, in love with Jessica.
Shylock, a rich Jew.
Tubal, a Jew, his friend.
Launcelot Gobbo, a clown, servant to Shylock.
Old Gobbo, father to Launcelot.
Leonardo, servant to Bassanio.
Balthasar, } servants to Portia.
Stephano, }
Portia, a rich heiress.
Nerissa, her waiting-maid.
Jessica, daughter to Shylock.

Magnificoes of Venice, Officers of the Court of Justice, Gaoler, Servants to Portia, and other Attendants.

Scene: *Partly at Venice, and partly at Belmont, the seat of Portia, on the Continent.*

INTRODUCTION.

1. Date of Composition.

It is impossible to know with exact certainty the date of the composition of a play by Shakespeare. Critics have adopted certain tests as evidences of this date, and divided these tests into external and internal.

Of positive *external* proof of the date of composition of *The Merchant of Venice* there is only one solitary fact, namely, that the play is mentioned in Francis Meres' *Paladis Tamia* which gives a pretty exhaustive catalogue of Shakespeare's plays in existence at the time. This book was published in 1598. *The Merchant of Venice* must thus have been written before 1598. Further the play was entered in the register of the Stationers' Company against the name of James Robertes under date 22*nd* July, 1598. This year may therefore be taken as the undoubted downward limit of the date.

It now remains to see at what time before that date the play was written—in other words, to ascertain the upward limit of the date.

In Henslowe's Diary dated 1594, he mentions that his Company, the Lord Admiral's, staged a play called *The Venesyon Comedey*. Malone supposes this was *The Merchant of Venice*. If this be so, this fixes the upward limit. This limit is confirmed by the fact that the many classical allusions, the frequent rhymes, occasional doggerel verses, and the close resemblance between the 'fooling' of Launcelot and his namesake in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* point to 1593-4, the year of the composition of that play, as the approximate date of this.

The play may thus be taken to have been written between 1594-98. We are now to see if this date can be much further narrowed. And here we must depend upon conjectural internal evidences.

Of *Internal* proofs, there are very few :

(*a*) In III. 2. Portia compares music to "a flourish where true subjects bow to a new crowned monarch." This Malone takes to refer to the coronation of Henry IV. of France at Rheims in 1594. (From this and Henslowe's book named above, Malone feels sure that the play was written some time in 1594).

(*b*) In I. 1. Antonio says, "nor is my whole estate upon the fortune of this present year." Chalmers takes occasion out of this to fix the date for 1597, the year in which the losses of the king of Spain made him repudiate his debts thus causing many merchants in Spain, Italy, and other places to become bankrupts.

(*c*) In V. 1. Lorenzo and Jessica attempt to 'outnight' each other. Their speeches, beginning 'In such a night', are supposed to have been imitated in an old comedy called *Wily Beguiled.* The passage is this :

> *Sophos.* In such a night did Paris win his love.
> *Lelia.* In such a night, Aeneas proved unkind.
> *Sophos.* In such a night, did Troilus court his dear.
> *Lelia.* In such a night, fair Phyllis was betrayed.
> *Sophos.* I'll prove as true as ever Troilus was.
> *Lelia.* And I as constant as Penelope.

Malone says that *Wily Beguiled* was written before 1596 ; this play must therefore have been composed a year or two earlier.

(*d*) In the Trial scene there are certain expressions very similar to passages occurring in Silvayn's *The Orator*, a book known to have been published in 1596.

(*e*) The phrase "merry devil" in II. 3. 2., nowhere else occurring in Shakespeare, indicates contemporaniety with the *Merry Devil of Edmonton* produced in 1596.

(*f*) If, as Mr. Lee suggests, there is any connection between the trial and execution of Dr. Lopez and this play, it must have been written later then 1594, the date of that famous trial.

We may thus put the date of the composition of this play between 1596-1598.

2. The sources of the plot.

The *Merchant of Venice*, is a tissue of two stories and two episodes. The former comprise the story of the Pound of Flesh (commonly called the Bond Story) and the story of the Three Caskets ; the latter the Lorenzo-Jessica episode and that of the rings. Editors have traced these stories and episodes to various sources, though it can certainly be said that Shakespeare was not indebted to them all and might in the cases of some have never had known them at all.

The Bond story :

(1) It has been traced to a very ancient ballad, "shewing the cruelty of Gernutus, a Jew who lending to a merchant a hundred crowns, would have a pound of his flesh because he could not pay him at the time appointed." The very expression 'a merry jest' by which Shylock characterises the forfeiture nominated, occurs in it, as also a good many other resemblances in language and ideas.

The conclusion then is, that either Shakespeare copied from this ballad or this ballad was founded on his play. The latter is untenable because in that case the author of the ballad would not have changed the name of the Jew from the popular Shylock into Gernutus; it would have been more full and circumstantial; the very first stanza informs us that the story was taken from some Italian novel; and it would not have altogether left out the episode connected with Portia at the trial scene. There can thus be little doubt that Gernutus preceded Shylock.

(2) There is another ballad called *The Northern Lord* containing incidents which bear a close resemblance to the Bond story of the present play. But it has not yet been definitely established whether the ballad or the play was earlier in date.

(3) Capell points out that the *Jew of Venice* was an exceedingly well-known story in Shakespeare's day; celebrated in ballads; and taken from an Italian book named *Il Pecorone*, written by Ser Giovanni Fiorentino. This novel contains the story of the pound of flesh, and, as it was printed, closed with a tale of Boccaccio (the first of day the tenth) which might have suggested the incident of the caskets also. There is reason to believe that Shakespeare was familiar with Ser Giovanni in English.

(4) Tyrwhitt suggested that 'a common remote origin' might be found for both the Bond and the Casket stories in the *Gesta Romanorum*, a collection of stories presumably compiled towards the end of the 13th century in England. An English

translation (dated 1510-15) did exist in Shakespeare's day, and was widely read.

(5) The earlier version of the story of flesh to be cut from a man's body, is found in the *Vana parva* of our own epic *Mahabharata.*

(5) The 95th declamation of Silvayn's *Orator* is "of a Jew, who would for his debt have a pound of the flesh of a Christian". Dr. Farmer was the first to call attention to this book printed in 1596.

(7) In the *Cursor Mundi*, one of *The Legends of the Holy Rood*, Dr. Morris found the story, so well known to us, in the *Merchant of Venice*, of the merchant and the pound of flesh. This story is believed to "the very earliest reference to the Bond Story in English."

The story of the Caskets :

In regard to this there is less diversity of opinion than concerning the Bond story.

(1) The story occurs in the *Gesta Romanorum* but the resemblances hardly go further than the language of the mottoes on the caskets.

(2) It also occurs in Boccaccio's *Decameron*, the first story of the tenth day.

(3) Further it has been traced to the *Confessio Amantis* of Gower where, however, there are two Caskets instead of three, and both have the same external appearance.

The Lorenzo-Jessica episode :

(1) It is traced by Dunlop to the Fourteenth Tale of Massuccio di Salerno,—the story of a young gentleman of Messina who becomes enamoured of the daughter of a rich Neapolitan miser and elopes with her, she carrying away a rich store of her father's jewels. But it yet remains to be established that Shakespeare knew and had consulted this Tale.

Warton who was the first to refer to the Ballad of Gernutus hinted also that "Shakespeare was indebted for the framework at least of this drama to an older play, in which the Bond and the Casket stories were already combined."

It appears from Gosson's *Schoole of Abuse*, printed in 1579, that "the character of a cruel and covetous Jew had been exhibited with good applause before Shakespeare's Shylock appeared." Gosson speaks of, "The *Jew* and *Ptolome*, shown at the Bull, the one representing the greediness of worldly chusers and bloody minds of usurers." The reference certainly is to *The Jew*. But the play is now lost. Editors agree that this play must have combined the two stories and thus offered a fertile source of materials to Shakespeare. One has gone so far as to publish a letter from Spenser to Grabriel Harvey in which there is an allusion corroborating the supposition that Gosson's *Jew* was the prototype of *The Merchant of Venice*.

The only other anterior piece of writing which is supposed to have influenced Shakespeare is Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* written probably about 1589-90.

3. Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* and Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*.

The germ and suggestion of Shylock has been traced to Marlowe's Barabas, transformed by Shakespeare into a genuine Jewish usurer. Barabas and Shylock are indeed two altogether and essentially different characters. Barabas is a mere monster; he kills in sport; poisons whole nunneries; and invents infernal machines. Shylock, in the midst of his savage purpose, is a man. His motives, feelings. resentments, have something human in them. Thus essentially different, the two plays have certain verbal similarities, besides the one great fact of each of the Jews having none but a daughter in life.

The similarities are these :—

(1) Barabas on his first appearance enumerates his argosies, and so does Shylock too (I. 3).

(2) "There are blessings promised to the Jews,
And herein was old Abraham's happiness".
(I. *of M.* I. 1).

Passage about Jacob, with a reference to Abraham, ending :
"This was a way to thrive, and he was blessed ;
And *thrift* is blessing, if men steal it not"
(*M.* of *V.* I. 3).

(3) "You have my goods, my money, and my wealth etc.
...you can request no more
Unless you wish to take my life."
(I. *of M.* I. 2).

Greatly improved in Shylock's speech :

"Nay, take my life and all" etc. (*M.* of *V.* IV. 1).

(4) "What, bring you scripture to confirm your wrong ?" (I. of *M.* I. 2).

"The devil can cite scripture for his purpose." (*M. of V.* 1. 3).

(5) Oh my girl,
My gold, my fortune, my felicity,....
Oh girl, oh gold, oh beauty, oh my bliss.
(I. *of M.* II. 1).

"My daughter !—O my ducats !—O my daughter ! (*M. of V.* II. 8).

(6) Barabas and slave against heavy feeders in general (I. *of M.* II. 2): Shylock and Launcelot (*M. of V.* II. 5).

(7) Both Barabas and Shylock inveigh against Christians as "swine-eating christians" (I. *of M.* II. 1); and the Christians called both "dogs" (Ib.) ; Barabas, like Shylock, boasts of Jewish "sufferance" (Ib. I. 1) ; the same condition that the Jew was to be converted to Christianity is imposed on Barabas if he failed to pay certain money (I. 1).

These parallel passages prove conclusively that the *Jew of Malta* must have been present to Shakespeare's mind when he wrote this play.

4. Did Shakespeare ever visit Italy ?

The question has been warmly mooted and contrary opinions expressed on it. But there are strong topographical and other evidences that incline one to believe that details mentioned in the play could only have been derived from close personal experience. And this is all the more certain because there had been published in England no books on Venice before the publication of Shakespeare's comedy.

(1) Young Gobbo kneeling before his father is supposed to have been suggested by a kneeling stone-figure forming the pedastal of a pillar containing the decrees of the republic.

(2) Old Gobbo presenting Bassanio with the present of 'a dish of doves', is a typical Italian custom.

(3) The Exchange used to be held at the Rialto.

(4) There was 'a common ferry' plying at the mouth of the Brenta between Belmont and Venice, a distance exactly of 20 miles.

(5) Shakespeare's study of the Jew must have been from life, and he could hardly have experience of Jewish life and habits in his own country whence the Jews had been banished as early as 1290.

Shakespeare's Company did not act in London between 1592-3. They might have been travelling on the continent, and Shakespeare might have been with his party.

Those who reject this theory hold that Shakespeare's intimate knowledge of Venice, was derived from (1) the merchants who traded between England and Venice, (2) the students who returned from the renowned university of Padua, and (3) travellers. That Shakespeare lived with eyes and ears open to all, even the most trivial occurrences and the merest gossips, can hardly be doubted.

5. The Jews in Shakespeare's time.

The Jews were expelled from England by Edward the First in 1290, and were not permitted to return untill 1650, under Cromwell. From this it has been inferred that Shakespeare could have no direct and personal knowledge of the Jews. But we learn from Coryat's *Crudities* that the Jews were in his day born and bred in England. On the evidence of contemporary records it may be asserted that the Jews were residing in England in Shakespeare's life-time. Cromwell might have formally withdrawn the edict banishing them, and he might have been led to do this by the very fact of the Jewish element of the population having considerably increased in his time. However, the Jew was never a very popular element. In the Middle Ages, kings used to treat them like milch-cows draining them dry under the most exquisite refinements of physical torture whenever money was necessary. The Christian has always a particular aversion for the Jew, and Shakespeare was perhaps not exaggerating when he made his good Antonio, one of the "best-conditioned" of men, treat a typical Hebrew with the most disgraceful and intolerant contempt. There was little love lost between the two communities—there was much suspicion and mutual animosity prevalent between them ; and the Jewish doctrine of a tooth for a tooth, was naturally directed with all valid violence against men who made nothing of kicking and spitting at them even in public places. In the midst of men living in an organized, civilized society founded on law and justice, they were aliens oppressed with relentless cruelty, not allowed to worship in their own way, robbed of their hard-earned gains, and generally regarded as outlaws and pariahs who must needs make sufferance their badge and patience their sovereign remedy.

Shakespeare seems to have been filled with stern indignation at a condition of things so degrading to a section of his fellowmen. With his large-hearted and consmopolitan toleration he inveighs against the iniquity in the piteous appeal of humanity he has put into the mouth of Shylock. He teaches the virtue and necessity of toleration by relieving the grim monster of half his repulsiveness by making him the victim of Christian oppression and persecution. He almost engages the sympathy of the reader for Shylock.

6. The original of Shylock.

The original of Shylock is now believed to have been one Dr. Lopez who was physician to Queen Elizabeth and executed for supposed complicity in one of the many plots against her life. Dr. Lopez was, before he joined the royal service, attached to the household of Lord Leicester to whose company of players Shakespeare belonged throughout his career. There can be no doubt that he was deeply interested in the fate of this remarkable man who, on account of his more or less intimate acquaintance with five different European languages, was associated by the Queen as an interpreter to a certain Antonio Perez, said to be distantly connected with the Royal family of Portugal and a possible claimant to the throne of Spain. The Spanish fever was then at its height in England, and he was naturally regarded as a popular idol. Philip, king of Spain, offered a bribe to the Jewish Doctor for the life of the pretender but Lopez declined it. His one fault was that he did not bring the matter to the notice of the Queen. The Earl of Essex who appears to have developed a deep-rooted hostility towards the Doctor, set about procuring and even suborning evidence to prove that Lopez was privy not only to a plot for the murder of Antonio but also to a larger conspiracy aiming at the life of the sovereign. He was charged with treason, tried, confessed his guilt, as he admitted, through fear of the rack, and was hanged in the midst of the jeers and taunts of an infuriated populace triumphing over what they considered to be the merited execution of a Jew. The incident seems to have made a great noise at the time, and we learn from Henslowe's Diary that the *Jew* formed the subject of no less than twenty representations at the time. Of these three are well-known, Gosson's 'Jew' shown at 'the Bull', Marlowe's Barrabas, and Shakespeare's Shylock. The points of connection between Lopez and the *Merchant of Venice* may be found in the name Antonio; in the date of Henslowe's '*Venesyon comodey*' which has been supposed to be the first rough draft of the play made in August, the execution taking place in May, 1594; in the reference to the rack; and in Gratiano's reference to the twelve Jurymen to send Shylock to the gallows.

7. The plea for toleration.

There are some critics who would make Shakespeare a *doctrinnaire* insisting in this play on the necessity and justice of universal toleration. But a play is a play above all; and Shakespeare, of all writers, is the last to betray himself. He did not sit down with the conscious and deliberate purpose of writing a treatise on toleration, though his abhorrence of intolerance crops out in more places than one in this play. Particularly in Shylock who is represented as having been made "the hard, savage, relentless creature we see him by long and cruel oppression. He inherited a nature embittered by centuries of insult and outrage, and his own wretched experience had only aggravated its bitterness." Except in certain words that fall from Portia, there is not in this play a trace of any recognition of the great doctrine of religious toleration; but there is enough implied in the characterisation and in the trend of the action, of the great unwisdom of religious persecution. Spedding cannot believe that Shakespeare, either in choosing the subject or treating it, was thinking about Jewish grievances or disabilities. But it is impossible to read the famous declamation put into the mouth of Shylock without feeling that Shakespeare was putting the whole wealth of his sympathy and toleration in it. "Hath not a Jew eyes?" etc. From these forceful and undeniable premises Shylock indeed draws the conclusion that Jewish revenge may be as good as Christian injuries, but the conclusion implies that if there were no injuries on the one side there would no revenge on the other. The play is indeed a protest against intolerance though it was not written with any deliberate ethical or theological purpose.

8. The Law in the Trial Scene.

As usual in every question relating to Shakespeare and his plays, there is a wide difference of opinion on the subject of the soundness or unsoundness of the law in the trial scene. Hazlitt speaks of the "sound maxims of Jurisprudence", which characterise the trial. Mrs. Jameson condemns it as "a legal quibble" ; Campbell not only supported this view but boldly declared that Shylock was a poor ill-used man.

Undoubtedly the law is defective, and Shylock is the victim of illegality and sophistry.

The facts of the case are conceded by all the parties—Antonio admits he had taken the money, given the bond, and forfeited it. A tender of three times the amount is made and refused by the Plaintiff who insists on the forfeiture. Portia's conclusions of law thereupon are fivefold :—

1. That the bond was valid, and the plaintiff entitled to his pound of flesh.
2. That he was to cut exactly a pound, neither more nor less, and in the cutting must not shed a drop of blood.
3. That the plaintiff was liable to capital punishment for practising or conspiring against the life of a Christian fellow-citizen.
4. That he could only escape the punishment by giving one half his fortune to his daughter (who had just married a Christian), and the other half to the state, and by himself becoming a Christian.
5. That by refusing it in open court the plaintiff had forfeited all his claim to the money.

None of these rulings bears the slightest resemblance to any principle of law or equity recognized in a civilized country. There are other defects too—no jury is empanelled ; the Judge knows the facts, the decision is to be given by a jurisconsult to be brought in for the purpose ; there are no witnesses, at least the evidence of none is formally and on oath recorded. The whole has an appearance of a trial by a Turkish Cazi who fines the plaintiff, imprisons the defendant, and flogs the witnesses.

Let us consider the five points mentioned above in some detail :—

1. The bond could not be valid because it had a condition that was unreasonable and absurd. It could be valid only as far as the principal was concerned.

But it may be said that an 'immoral' condition did not invalidate a bond according to Venetian law. Still admitting that the first point was sound—

2. The second is a piece of "stupendous absurdity". The right to do a certain act confers the right to the necessary incidents of the act. The right to a plot of land implies the right to the enjoyment of the air that blows on it. Moreover the court cannot go beyond the original intention of the parties—and in the present case when the pound of flesh was agreed upon, it was well understood by the parties and known to them that a pound could not be cut with nice exactitude nor without a drop of blood being shed.

3. It is difficult to understand on what reasonable construction, the plaintiff could be held liable for taking a bond voluntarily signed by the defendant, and how his conduct therein amounted to conspiracy against the life of a citizen.

4. A court may allow commutation of a sentence but for any court to rule that as a penalty for the failure of a civil suit the plaintiff should change his religion, is beyond the limits of human probability and justice. This may be a reprisal but certainly not equity. This is to set up the court into an Inquisition and the judgment into an *auto da fa*.

5. This also is not sound law. The refusal of a tender does not extinguish the right to the principal, though it may extinguish all the benefit arising from it.

It may be said that all this is done in the interest of humanity but "does wrong, committed in the interest of humanity, cease to be wrong? And if ever the end sanctifies the means, why was not the wrong committed betimes in the sentence—why, not until after the sentence, was it first revealed?" —asks Prof. Jhering who condemns the whole proceeding as an attempt to cheat the Jew out of his right.

9. The characters :—

Shylock.—Shylock is one of the most dominant figures in all Shakespeare's creation. He is essentially tragic, with a grim determination, a firm tenacity and energy of will. He is 'a good hater'; a man not less, if not more, sinned against than sinning. Living in a Christian country, he is hated and spurned at by all; he is robbed of his wealth and his daughter, the two things for which he seemed to exist and for which his life had any meaning. When all is gone, he relies on one only hope of revenge—a bond given and forfeited by a royal Christian merchant who of all persons then in Venice appears to have the most hated and offended Shylock. But he is cheated of that revenge too which might to a certain extent have propitiated his embittered feelings, and cheated by a legal quibble in the face of a clear right that law and justice had given him, and cheated not only of his remaining wealth but of his life and, what was perhaps more dear to him, his Jewish religion. Nothing could be more absurd than in the trial scene to appeal to such a man's mercy when no mercy had ever been shown to him; when, on the contrary, friends and foes had combined to drive him into the most desperate misanthrophy. The last words of Shylock are intensely pathetic, "I am not well, send the deed after me"—a cry welling out of his heart against the injustice of humanity.

Shylock is an individual but he is also the representative of a persecuted race. His consciousness of a superior 'elect', nationality, his patriotic pride, his sense of the injuries his nation has suffered at the hands of its persecutors, are intensely strong, and form, as it were, the motive springs of his life. "He hates our sacred nation",—this is one of his bitterest grounds of resentment against Antonio. He justifies his crafty ways of thriving by citing the example of Jacob and what his mother wrought in his behalf. If he gluts on the possibility of sanguinary revenge, he insists with eloquence and reason on the doctrine that Jewish revenge is at least as good as Christian injuries; and his patriotism breaks out in the sweeping rhetoric of the memorable speech which is ostensibly an appeal for religious toleration but really a vindication of Jewish reprisals on the example of Christian revenge.

Shylock is abhorred and execrated but the poet has given him qualities that raise him above contempt. His fierceness, cruelty and relentlessness, are dignified by intellectual vigour. His actions are deliberate, they are the emanations of his bold and masculine understanding. In the trial scene Shylock exhibits a vigour of understanding and intelligence that is truly remarkable, and the Judges are constrained to admit the validity of his inhuman cause. "In his hard, icy intellectuality, and his dry, mummy-like tenacity of purpose, with a dash, now and then, of biting, sarcastic humour, we see the remains of a great and noble nature...Nothing can daunt him; nothing disconcert him; remonstrance cannot move, ridicule cannot touch, obloquy cannot exasperate him" (Hudson). "He is a man whose intellectual power is not to be despised, a man who can feel deeply, and powerfully expostulate against, the indignity to which he is subjected" (Hunter).

Antonio :—Over against Shylock in the play stands the royal merchant, his would-be victim, Antonio. As Shylock is the spirit of self-seeking, Antonio is the spirit of self-sacrifice. Shylock loves his wealth above all other things, Antonio loves his friends and would lose all his wealth, nay, his life itself, for them. In the midst of his disasters Shylock roars and raves, in the midst of his Antonio is calm and self-controlled. Shylock is deserted by all, even by his daughter, Antonio is helped by all even by those who are in no way related to him. If Shylock is animated by a passionate strength of will, Antonio is made charming by a rare warmth of heart.

Antonio is a good man,
the kindest man,
The best-conditioned and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies, and one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

But it must be noted that Antonio, whatever his friends may think of him, is not altogether the pink of courtesy that he is here represented to be. His conduct towards Shylock in no way justifies the description. He railed at him and his usances. So far so good. But he had certainly no moral justification to spit on him, spurn him, and call him a dog, a cut-throat villain, "even where merchants most do congregate". When Shylock offers to lend the money on a merry jest desiring to be friends with him, Antonio scornfully rejects it and declares that he would reiterate his vilification and abuse of the Jew. Well might the Jew say, "the villany *you* teach me I will execute", though in his own exquisite ways of cruelty he knew how to better the instruction.

Apart from this, Antonio has an excellence of character rarely to be seen on the earth. He will coin his blood into drachmas to help a friend, and such a friend !—one who has taken loans with both hands only to fling them away in frivolous gaieties and reckless adventures. His anxiety for his friend's welfare is sincere and unbounded. He warns him not to slubber business for his sake, and, when the day of forfeiture passes, and the pound of flesh becomes due, he still wants Bassanio to seek his own convenience and not be anxious for him. In the trial scene while all are concerned about his fate and the course of justice are perverted for his sake, he alone remains quiet and tranquil as animated by the truest spirit of self-sacrifice.

Bassanio :—He is 'the prodigal Christian', who has disabled his estate by something showing a more swelling port than his faint means would grant continuance. His unthriftiness has left him "gagged" in great debts but has not taught him the sound lesson of economy. He would make one more adventure to retrieve his broken fortune, and asks Antonio to try the school-boy experiment of shooting an arrow of the self-same flight in the self-same direction so that he might "by adventuring both find both out". Like a prodigal he does not care to see that the other contingency is also possible, namely, that both might be lost. Armed with the arrow, he goes to Belmont and overcomes Portia. Whatever Bassanio might have been and to whatever wild courses he might have given way in youth, it cannot be said that they were such as could dishonour him. He was "a scholar and soldier", and worthy of Antonio's friendship and Portia's love. This one circumstance lifts him above suspicion. Nor does he seek the hand of Portia as a sordid fortune-hunter. He indeed praises her beauty but he values her more for her wondrous virtues, and the speechless messages she had sent to him through her eyes. The occasions for true self-sacrifice do not come in his way, and we have thus no certain test of the sincerity of the friendship and gratitude he owes to Antonio.

Gratiano :—He is the spirit of mirth in a play that though professing to be a comedy hovers for a considerable length of it on the brink of the tragic. He speaks an infinite deal of nothing, and in his philosophy of gaiety holds up to ridicule those who "are reputed wise for saying nothing". Such men, he is sure, would damn those ears which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools. But not he—his constant babbling makes us desire that he should babble more. With a mercurial temperament, he is sincere in his attachment to his friends, and his one endeavour seems to be not to please himself but to raise his friends on the wave of his merriment above the gloom and misery of their lives. In the trial scene the astounding audacity of the Jew paralyses his tongue for a moment but when the Jew is silenced Gratiano breaks forth and rattles away to the infinite relief of all. He woos and wins Nerissa by swearing till his very roof is dry with oaths of love, and protests he would fear no other thing so sure as keeping safe the hoof of gold with a bit of cutler's poesy on it which Nerissa had put on his finger as her wedding gift. Volatile and voluble, Gratiano is not altogether without some tact, and he can "allay his skipping spirit" and adapt himself to his environment admirably.

Lorenzo.—In this play so full of business matters, of the Exchange and the Rialto, of bonds and forfeitures, of usances and ducats, Lorenzo supplies the element of romantic imagination and lyric love, the concentrated essence of the moonlight and the music, poetry and sentiment. In his company we get rid of the wild passions and the sombre gloom of the surrounding atmosphere, and escape with relief into the classical reminiscences of Troilus and Pyramus, Dido and Jason. He cannot be called a fortune-hunter although he elopes with the rich Jew's daughter, for the suggestion does not come from him that she should gild herself with her father's ducats; nor does he appear to be elated when it is announced at Belmont that the Jew had been forced to leave the whole of his immense wealth to him and his wife. It may be said that his love for the Jewess is sincere, and one hopes that it may continue so to the end. That he can in a very short while win his way to Portia's trust and confidence, speaks a good deal in his favour.

Launcelot.—Launcelot is 'the clown', the 'merry devil' of the play. Snail-slow in profit, a huge feeder, he leaves a thrifty, even rigid and niggardly, master for a prodigal one who gives rare new liveries. He is a harmless, innocent fellow whose one concern in life seems to have been to pose as a scholar before fools and a fool before scholars. He has a deep natural affection in him; though he tries confusion with his father by a false report of his son's death, he loves him; though he leaves the Jew, he is sorry to part with the Jew's daughter and his "tears exhibit his tongue". His mind is yet in a chaotic condition in which the unformed germs of conscience and loyalty, wit and fun, puns and pranks, welter and roll in a pleasing confusion. He has picked up odds and ends of learning from his many masters, fine words and fine expressions, which he employs in season and out of season in the most exquisitely blundering way. He is one of the brotherhood of Touchstones and Festes but he has none of Touchstone's varied experiences of life, Feste's practical sense, or the deep and tender sympathy of Lear's fool.

Portia.—Portia, Isabella, Beatrice, and Rosalind may be classed toghther as characters of intellect. "She unites in herself all the noblest and most loveable qualities that ever met together in women". This is Mrs. Jameson's opinion of her—while, on the other hand, Hazlitt accuses her of a certain degree of affectation and pedantry very unusual in Shakespeare's women. These are the two contrary views that have been offered of Portia, and we have to decide which is truer or, if possible, to strike out a way for us between the two extremes.

In her account of the various suitors she displays infinite power, wit, and vivacity. But we feel that wit and vivacity are in her subordinate to the tender, the intellectual, and the imaginative elements in her character.

Her warm and generous affections render Portia no less loveable as a woman than her mental endowments win for her our sincere admiration. In the casket scene with Bassanio, every line that Portia speaks is full of sentiment and beauty, of poetry and passion. Her subsequent surrender of herself in heart and soul, of her maiden freedom, and her vast possessions, shows all the tenderness and delicacy of a devoted woman blended with all the dignity and serious, measured self-possession of a rich heiress who is conscious of her social position and responsibility. In this confession spoken in the presence of attendants and vassals, there is certainly nothing of the passionate self-abandonment of Juliet nor of the artless simplicity of Miranda, but a consciousness and a tender seriousness approaching to solemnity, which are no less touching.

But all the finest traits of Portia's character are brought out in the Trial Scene. "There she shines forth all her divine self". Her intellectual powers, her elevated sense of religion, her high honourable principles, her best and most tender feelings as a woman, are all fully laid out. She has two objects in view :—to deliver her husband's friend, and to maintain her husband's honour by the discharge of his just debt. Hence she first asks the Jew to accept payment if at an enhanced rate. She begins with an appeal to his mercy. She next attacks his avarice. Then she appeals in the same breath to both his avarice and his pity. When all these fail, when every attempt to melt the heart of the inexorable and implacable usurer fails, she brings in the legal quibble with which her cousin Bellario has armed her, and which she has so long kept in reserve as a last resource. This vanquishes the obdurate heart and when the Jew offers to depart with only the principal, smothered scorn, indignation and disgust burst forth from Portia and she insists on the plaintiff getting nothing but his due.

There is a commanding grace, a high-bred, airy elegance, a spirit of magnificence in all that she says and does, as one to whom splendour had been familiar from her birth. She is full of penetrative wisdom and genuine tenderness, and lively wit, and her wisdom is without a touch of the sombre or the sad.

She may well merit Wordsworth's famous ideal of a perfect woman—

> A noble woman nobly plan'd,
> To warn, to comfort, and command ;
> A creature not too bright or good
> For human nature's daily food ;
> For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
> Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smile.

The impression she leaves on our mind is that she is a dutiful, loving, magnanimous, resourceful woman whom neither prosperity elates nor adversity daunts.

Two elements of character are most conspicuous in Portia—moral strength and intellectual vigour. The former is exhibited in her dutiful submission to her father's will though the merest accident depending from it might blast her life's happiness for ever ; in her resignation of herself and all that was hers to her husband ; in her suddenly parting with him even on the day of the wedding for the sake of his friend ; and in her conscious subordination of her own essential superiority to her newly-married husband. The trial scene demonstrates her intellectual force and quickness.

Nerissa.—Nerissa is not a 'serving-woman' but a 'lady companion', a 'confidential friend' to Portia. She is "a clever, trusty companion who has caught a little of her lady's elegance and romance ; she affects to be lively and sententious, falls in love, and makes her favour conditional on the fortune of the caskets, and, in short, mimics her mistress with good emphasis and discretion. Nerissa and the gay, talkative Gratiano, are as well matched as the incomparable Portia and her magnificent and captivating lover". (Jameson).

Jessica.—We observe Jessica with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow. She has a heart full of love, a passionate yearning, which is satisfied by the love she gets from the romantic Lorenzo ;

and with perfectly justifiable readiness she resolves to elope with him out of the hell of her father's house. But we can hardly reconcile ourselves to the fact that she should relieve him of his ducats, squander them away most recklessly, and sell for a couple of monkeys even the very turquoise which she must often have heard her father speak with some reverential esteem as the only souvenir of her dead mother. Nor can we think that she was right in abandoning a poor man who doted on her in the midst of his Christian enemies, and abandoning him—what would greatly enhance his irritation and resentment—for a Christian. Such conduct naturally offends the poor father's personal and national vanity, makes him resolve on the inhuman revenge, and thus hastens his ultimate destruction. It is no excuse to her to say that that father was a monster of iniquity. He was all the same *her* father, and as such entitled to her highest reverence, sympathy and duty. As against her, we have in this play the evidence of Portia's filial dutifulness—she resolves to submit to her father's will even though it should blast her life and happiness for ever. Notwithstanding all the delicate and tender emotions that stir her heart, her dreamy sentimentality, her intellectual alertness, her trust and confidence, her self-abandonment and passionate love, she can never stand high in our estimation as long as the claims of duty are recognized in the world as superior to those of passion. One critic has thought fit to characterise her as "the pert, disobedient hussy Iessica," "a worthless minx"; another that as a lover of fashion, she was "born to be cajoled by fashion".

10. The Duration of the Action.

The following is Prof. Daniel's computation :—

Day 1. Act I. *Interval*—say a week.

Day 2. Act II, i-vii. *Interval*—one day.

Day 3. Act II, viii and ix. *Interval*—bringing the time to within a fortnight of the maturity of the bond.

Day 4. Act III, i. *Interval*—rather more than a fortnight.

Day 5. Act III, ii-iv.

Day 6. Act III, v—Act iv.

Days 7 and 8. Act v.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Venice. A street.*

Enter ANTONIO, SALARINO, *and* SALANIO.

truth
Ant. In sooth, I know not why I am so sad :
It wearies me ; you say it wearies you ;
got— But how I caught it, found it, or came by it, got, acquired
What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn ;
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me, converts me into
great-difficulty recognise
That I have much ado to know myself.
Salar. Your mind is tossing on the ocean ;
large merchant-vessels
There, where your argosies with portly sail, swollen with the wind
sirs literally citizens grand
Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood,
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea,
tower over
Do overpeer the petty traffickers, smaller vendors
That curtsy to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings. sails
Salan. Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth, a venture
great heart
The better part of my affections would
ventures at sea
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still constantly
Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind,
Peering in maps for ports and piers and roads ;
And every object that might make me fear
Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt undoubtedly
Would make me sad.

breath

Salar. My wind cooling my broth soup
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought
What harm a wind too great at sea might do. storm
I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,
But I should think of shallows and of flats,
And see my wealthy Andrew dock'd in sand, immovably fixed
sides embedded, lying
Vailing her high-top lower than her ribs
To kiss her burial. Should I go to church
And see the holy edifice of stone, huge stone structure
And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,
Which touching but my gentle vessel's side,
cargo
Would scatter all her spices on the stream,
waves
Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks,
only
And, in a word, but even now worth this, a moment before
And now worth nothing? Shall I have the thought
To think on this, and shall I lack the thought
That such a thing bechanced would make me sad? happening
But tell not me; I know, Antonio
Is sad to think upon his merchandise.

Ant. Believe me, no: I thank my fortune for it,
My ventures are not in one bottom trusted, ships
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate
Upon the fortune of this present year:
Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.

Salar. Why, then you are in love.

Ant. Fie, fie!

Salar. Not in love neither? Then let us say you are sad,
Because you are not merry: and 'twere as easy
For you to laugh and leap and say you are merry,
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed Janus,
Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time:
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes
And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper,

lowering its top sail

cover

moment after

merchandise

Imp

Imp

And other of such vinegar aspect sour countenance; morose appearance
That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile,
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable. the grave old man

Enter BASSANIO, LORENZO, *and* GRATIANO.

Salan. Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman,
Gratiano and Lorenzo. Fare ye well:
We leave you now with better company. more enjoyable

Salar. I would have stay'd till I had made you merry,
If worthier friends had not prevented me. anticipated; obstructing my way

Ant. Your worth is very dear in my regard. consideration estimation
ny opinion is I take it, your own business calls on you
And you embrace the occasion to depart. take the opportunity

Salar. Good morrow, my good lords.

Bass. Good signiors both, when shall we laugh? say, when?
You grow exceeding strange: must it be so?

Salar. We'll make our leisures to attend on yours.
[*Exeunt Salarino and Salanio.*

Lor. My Lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio,
We two will leave you: but at dinner-time,
I pray you, have in mind where we must meet. remember

Bass. I will not fail you.

Gra. You look not well, Signior Antonio;
You have too much respect upon the world: consideration for.
They lose it that do buy it with much care: [illegible]
Believe me, you are marvellously changed.

Ant. I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano;
A stage where every man must play a part,
And mine a sad one.

Gra. Let me play the fool:
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come, age with wrinkles
And let my liver rather heat with wine
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans. sighs killing; fatal

Why should a man, whose blood is warm within,
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?
Sleep when he wakes and creep into the jaundice gradually get—
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio—
I love thee, and it is my love that speaks— that prompts me to say
There are a sort of men whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,
And do a wilful stillness entertain, maintain an obstinate silence
With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion credited with the reputation
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit, knowledge regardless
As who should say 'I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips let no dog bark!'
O my Antonio, I do know of these
That therefore only are reputed wise
For saying nothing, when, I am very sure,
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.
I'll tell thee more of this another time:
But fish not, with this melancholy bait, the bait of melancholy or gravity
For this fool gudgeon, this opinion.
Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well awhile for a time
I'll end my exhortation after dinner. oration, harangue
Lor. Well, we will leave you then till dinner time:
I must be one of these same dumb wise men,
For Gratiano never lets me speak.
Gra. Well, keep me company but two years moe,
Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.
Ant. Farewell: I'll grow a talker for this gear. on this occasion for the time
Gra. Thanks, i' faith, for silence is only commendable
In a neat's tongue dried.
[*Exeunt Gratiano and Lorenzo.*
Ant. Is that any thing now? a great deal of nonsense
Bass. Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more

than any man in all Venice. His reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them, they are not worth the search

Ant. Well, tell me now what lady is the same
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage, visit, journey
That you to-day promised to tell me of?

Bass. 'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,
How much I have disabled mine estate, overburdened, ruined my fortune, impoverished myself
By something showing a more swelling port grand style
Than my faint means would grant continuance: justify
Nor do I now make moan to be abridged
From such a noble rate; but my chief care style of living
pay off
Is to come fairly off from the great debts
Wherein my time something too prodigal spendthrift
Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio, pledged, involved
I owe the most, in money and in love,
And from your love I have a warranty pledge, guarantee
To unburden all my plots and purposes
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

Ant. I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it;
And if it stand, as you yourself still do, scheme
Within the eye of honour, be assured,
My purse, my person, my extremest means,
done
Lie all unlock'd to your occasions. necessity, needs, requirements

Bass. In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,
equal
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight
The self-same way, with more advised watch, careful or deliberate care.
out
To find the other forth, and by adventuring both risking, hazarding
still
I oft found both: I urge this childhood proof,
now
Because what follows is pure innocence. what I have got lost
I owe you much, and, like a wilful youth,
That which I owe is lost; but if you please reckless, (prodigal

To shoot another arrow that self way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
As I will watch the aim, or to find both either
chance Or bring your latter hazard back again its present loan
And thankfully rest debtor for the first. remain

Ant. You know me well, and herein spend but time merely waste
winding To wind about my love with circumstance ; your time
And out of doubt you do me now more wrong
making In making question of my uttermost + power - my willingness to help
Than if you had made waste of all I have : wasted whatever - for you
Then do but say to me what I should do
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am prest unto it : therefore, speak. ready

Bass. In Belmont is a lady richly left ;
And she is fair and, fairer than that word,
Of wondrous virtues : sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages : mute signals of the eyes
Her name is Portia, nothing undervalued
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia :
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth, excellence
For the four winds blow in from every coast country
Renowned suitors, and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece ;
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand, shores
And many Jasons come in quest of her. young Knights or gallants
O my Antonio, had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,
I have a mind that presages me such thrift, foretells me of such gain
That I should questionless be fortunate !

Ant. Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea ;
Neither have I money nor commodity goods
To raise a present sum : therefore go forth ;
Try what my credit can in Venice do :

That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost,
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia. fit-thee out-
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,
Where money is, and I no question make do not doubt-
To have it of my trust or for my sake. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Belmont. A room in* PORTIA'S *house*

Enter PORTIA *and* NERISSA.

truth poor self disgusted with

Por. By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world.

Ner. You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are: and yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much as they that starve with nothing. It is no mean happiness therefore, to be seated in the mean: superfluity comes sooner by white hairs, competence lives longer.

place

Por. Good sentences and well pronounced. delivered

maxims

Ner. They would be better, if well followed.

Por. If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word 'choose!' I may neither choose whom I would nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none?

choice restrained

Ner. Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men at their death have good inspirations: therefore the lottery, that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver and lead, whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you, will, no doubt never be chosen by any rightly but one who shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

Por. I pray thee, over-name them; and as thou namest them, I will describe them; and, according to my description, level at my affection.

Ner. First, there is the Neapolitan prince. prince of Naples

Por. Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself. his horse

about

Ner. Then there is the County Palatine. the Count of Palatine

Por. He doth nothing but frown, as who should say 'If you will not have me, choose:' he hears merry tales and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these two!

scowl
another
Heraclitus
skeleton
forbid

about

Ner. How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

Por. God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker: but, he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine; he is every man in no man; if a throstle sing, he falls straight a capering: he will fence with his own shadow: if I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands. If he would despise me, I would forgive him, for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

worse

Ner. What say you, then, to Falconbridge, the young baron of England?

Por. You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him : he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian, and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper man's picture, but, alas, who can converse with a dumb-show ? How oddly he is suited ! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany and his behaviour every where.

cannot speak
absolutely worthless stock
handsome
talk
queerly
dressed
jacket or coat
hat

Ner. What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbour ?

Por. That he hath a neighbourly charity in him, for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman and swore he would pay him again when he was able : I think the Frenchman became his surety and sealed under for another.

love
got
on
from
him

Ner. How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew ?

Por. Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk : when he is best, he is a little worse than a man, and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast : an the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

if
happen
avoid
manage; contrive

Ner. If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

to tolerate the chances of the choosing the right casket

Por. Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket, for if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do any thing, Nerissa, ere I'll be married to a sponge.

full
wrong

Ner. You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords : they have acquainted me with their determinations ; which is, indeed, to return to their home and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition depending on the caskets.

way

condition imposed on the choosing of the

Por. If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable, for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence, and I pray God grant them a fair departure.

Ner. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

Por. Yes, yes, it was Bassanio; as I think, he was so called.

Ner. True, madam: he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

Por. I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

Enter a Serving-man.

How now! what news?

Serv. The four strangers seek for you, madam, to take their leave: and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco, who brings word the prince his master will be here to-night.

Por. If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good a heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach: if he have the condition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me.

Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before.
Whiles we shut the gates upon one wooer, another knocks at
the door. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Venice. A public place.*

Enter BASSANIO *and* SHYLOCK.

Shy. Three thousand ducats; well.

Bass. Ay, sir, for three months.

Shy. For three months; well.

Bass. For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound. a land security

Shy. Antonio shall become bound; well.

help; assist — gratify; oblige, please

Bass. May you stead me? will you pleasure me? shall I know your answer?

Shy. Three thousand ducats for three months and Antonio bound.

Bass. Your answer to that.

substantial

i.e. an unimpaired credit

Shy. Antonio is a good man.

supposition, doubtful

Bass. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

Shy. Oh, no, no, no, no: my meaning in saying he is a good man is to have you understand me that he is sufficient. and a surety Yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound sailing to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad. dispersed, scattered etc. But ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats and water-rats, land-thieves and water-thieves, I mean pirates, and then there is the peril of waters, winds and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats; I think I may take his bond.

hypothetical doubtful points — exchange — scattered

Bass. Be assured you may.

Shy. I will be assured I may; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio?

Bass. If it please you to dine with us.

the flesh of swine — swine

Shy. Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation which your prophet the Nazarite conjured the devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following, but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto? Who is he comes here?

Nazarite of Nazareth

in Ch

eastern

Enter ANTONIO.

Bass. This is Signior Antonio. cringing servile fellow
Shy. [*Aside*] How like a fawning publican he looks !
I hate him for he is a Christian,
But more for that in low simplicity in mean foolishness, foolishly easily
He lends out money gratis and brings down
The rate of usance money here with us in Venice,
If I can catch him once upon the hip, at an advantage
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation, and he rails, jews
Even there where merchants most do congregate, gather, assemble
On me, my bargains and my well-won thrift, honestly earned gains
Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe, race
If I forgive him !
Bass. Shylock, do you hear ?
Shy. I am debating of my present store, calculating (mentally)
And, by the near guess of my memory,
I cannot instantly raise up the gross the full or total amount
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that ?
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew Jew of my tribe,
Will furnish me. But soft ! how many months wait a while
Do you desire ? [*To Ant.*] Rest you fair, good signior ;
Your worship was the last man in our mouths.
Ant. Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow
By taking nor by giving of excess, interest
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I'll break a custom. [*To Bass.*] Is he yet possess'd informed
How much ye would ?
Shy. Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.
Ant. And for three months.
Shy. I had forgot ; three months ; you told me so.
Well, then, your bond ; and let me see ; but hear you ;

Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow
Upon advantage. interest
Ant. I do never use it. take interest
Shy. When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's sheep—
This Jacob from our holy Abram was,
As his wise mother wrought in his behalf, ingenious
Rebecca
The third possessor; ay, he was the third— of the office & dignity of the patriarch.
Ant. And what of him? did he take interest?
Shy. No, not take interest, not, as you would say,
money Directly interest: mark what Jacob did;
When Laban and himself were compromised agreed
That all the eanlings which were streak'd and pied coloured
Should fall as Jacob's hire, remuneration
The skilful shepherd peel'd me certain wands rods
And stuck them up before the fulsome ewes, [illegible]
Who then conceiving did in eaning time
produce Fall parti-colour'd lambs, and those were Jacob's.
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest:
And thrift is blessing if men steal it not. gain; interest

Ant. This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for;
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,
But sway'd and fashion'd by the hand of heaven. made & ruled over
Was this inserted to make interest good? added dispensed
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams? [illegible]
Shy. I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast:
But note me, signior.

Ant. Mark you this, Bassanio,
The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.
An evil soul producing holy witness evil; the testimony of the Bible
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,
A goodly apple rotten at the heart:
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath! dishonesty & knavery
good-looking

Shy. Three thousand ducats ; 'tis a good round sum.
Three months from twelve ; then, let me see ; the rate— [illegible]
Ant. Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you? obliged [illegible]
Shy. Signior Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my moneys and my usances : [illegible]
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug, of the shoulder
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe. race
Your call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog, murderous
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine, a kind of large loose cloak
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help :
Go to, then ; you come to me, and you say
'Shylock, we would have moneys :' you say so ;
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur dog
Over your threshold : moneys is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say
'Hath a dog money? is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?' Or
Shall I bend low and in a bondman's key, the meek & flattering language of a slave; a servile tone
With bated breath and whispering humbleness,
Say this ;
'Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last ;
You spurn'd me such a day ; another time
You call'd me dog ; and for these courtesies politeness
I'll lend you thus much moneys?'
Ant. I am as like to call thee so again,
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
As to thy friends ; for when did friendship take friend?
A breed for barren metal of his friend?
But lend it rather to thine enemy,

failing in paying
Who, if he break, thou mayst with better face more justifiably
Exact the penalty.
Shy. Why, look you, how you storm! appears angrily – in a violent passion
I would be friends with you and have your love,
insult
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with,
Supply your present wants and take no doit a trifle, or interest, or [illegible]
Of usance for my moneys, and you'll not hear me:
This is kind I offer. [illegible]
Bass. This were kindness
Shy. This kindness will I show.
Go with me to a notary, seal me there lawyer attorney drawing deeds
Your single bond; and, in a merry sport,
If you repay me not on such a day,
In such a place, such sum or sums as are
lending agreement
Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit penalty
Be nominated for an equal pound named mentioned
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body pleaseth me. it pleases me
Ant. Content, i' faith: I'll seal to such a bond agreed
And say there is much kindness in the Jew.
Bass. You shall not seal to such a bond for me:
I'll rather dwell in my necessity. continue in my wants
Ant. Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it: bond
Within these two months, that's a month before
This bond expires, I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.
Shy. O father Abram, what these Christians are, a patriarch [illegible]
Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect [illegible]
The thoughts of others! Pray you, tell me this;
If he should break his day, what should I gain
By the exaction of the forfeiture?
A pound of man's flesh taken from a man
Is not so estimable, profitable neither,

As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,
To buy his favour, I extend this friendship : offer; goodwill
If he will take it, so ; if not, adieu ;
And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.
Ant. Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.
Shy. Then meet me forthwith at the notary's ;
Give him direction for this merry bond,
And I will go and purse the ducats straight, [illegible]
See to my house, left in the fearful guard
Of an unthrifty knave, and presently [illegible]
I will be with you. [illegible]
Ant. Hie thee, gentle Jew. [*Exit Skylock.*
The Hebrew will turn Christian : he grows kind.
Bass. I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.
Ant. Come on : in this there can be no dismay ; cause of fear
My ships come home a month before the day. [illegible] [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Belmont. A room in* PORTIA'S *house.*

Flourish of cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF MOROCCO *and his train ;* PORTIA, NERISSA, *and others attending.*

Mor. Mislike me not for my complexion,
The shadow'd livery of the burnish'd sun, burning
To whom I am a neighbour and near bred.
Bring me the fairest creature northward born, woman
Where Phœbus' fire scarce thaws the icicles, the heat of the sun scarcely melts the snow
And let us make incision for your love,
To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine.
I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine face; appearance
Hath fear'd the valiant : by my love, I swear
The best-regarded virgins of our clime

[illegible]

its aspect, face of [illegible]
Have loved it too: I would not change this hue, dark brown colour complexion
Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.
Por. In terms of choice I am not solely led matter of choosing (a husband)
guidance
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes:
Besides, the lottery of my destiny
Bars me the right of voluntary choosing:
But if my father had not scanted me narrowed my chances for choosing
And hedged me by his wit, to yield myself his sagacity or foresight
His wife who wins me by that means I told you, lottery of the caskets
Yourself, renowned prince, then stood as fair
suitor
As any comer I have look'd on yet
For my affection. [illegible]
Mor. Even for that I thank you:
Therefore, I pray you, lead me to the caskets
To try my fortune. By this scimitar, sword
That slew the Sophy and a Persian prince
That won three fields of Sultan Solyman, battles
I would outstare the sternest eyes that look, frighten by frowning face
Outbrave the heart most daring on the earth,
Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear,
Yea, mock the lion when he roars for prey,
To win thee, lady. But, alas the while!
If Hercules and Lichas play at dice to decide
qualities
Which is the better man, the greater throw
May turn by fortune from the weaker hand:
So is Alcides beaten by his page; proved to be inferior to
And so may I, blind fortune leading me, into the wrong casket
Miss that which one unworthier may attain, [illegible] myself
And die with grieving.
Por. You must take your chance,
And either not attempt to choose at all,
Or swear, before you choose, if you choose wrong

Never to speak to lady afterward
In way of marriage: therefore be advised. do not be rash
Mor. Nor will not. Come, bring me unto my chance
Por. First, forward to the temple: after dinner + when the oath was to be administered
Your hazard shall be made.
Mor. the happiest Good fortune then!
To make me blest or cursed'st among men. the most wretched
[*Cornets, and exeunt*.

SCENE II. *Venice. A street.*

Enter LAUNCELOT.

agree to my running away

Laun. Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow and tempts me, saying to me 'Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot,' or 'good Gobbo,' or 'good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away.' My conscience says 'No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo,' or, as aforesaid, 'honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels.' Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack: 'Via!' says the fiend; 'away!' says the fiend, 'for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind,' says the fiend; 'and run.' Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me 'My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son,' or rather an honest woman's son; for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste; well, my conscience says 'Launcelot, budge not.' 'Budge,' says the fiend. 'Budge not,' says my conscience. 'Conscience,' say I, 'you counsel well;' 'Fiend,' say I, 'you counsel well:' to be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who, God bless the mark, is a kind of devil; and, to run away from

devil (fiend) · away (Via) · in the name of (for the heavens) · devil · had some touch of a knave in him (did something smack) · stir (budge) · [illegible]

[illegible] for naming
the devil

the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very incarnate devil incarnal; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but to my b belief as I tru think a kind of marked hard-conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your command; I will run.

Enter Old GOBBO *with a basket.*

Gob. Master young man, you, I pray you, which is the way to Master Jew's? Shylock's

Laun. [*Aside*] O heavens, this is my true-begotten father! who, being totally blind more than sand-blind, high-gravel blind, knows me not: I will try confusions with him. to confuse

Gob. Master young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to Master Jew's?

Laun. Turn up on your right hand at the next turning, but at the next turning of all on your left; marry, at the very next turning, turn on of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the direct Jew's house.

Gob. By God's saints sonties, 'twill be a hard way to find out- hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him or no?

Laun. Talk you of young master Launcelot? [*Aside*] Mark me now; now will I make him shed tears raise the waters. Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

Gob. No master, sir, but a poor man's son: his father, though I say it, is an honest exceeding poor man and, God be thanked, well-to-live. do

Laun. Well, let his father be what a' he will, we talk of young Master Launcelot.

Gob. Your worship's friend and Launcelot, sir.

Laun. But I pray you, therefore ergo, old man, ergo, I beseech you, talk you of young Master Launcelot?

Gob. Of Launcelot, an't please your mastership.

if it

Laun. Ergo, Master Launcelot. Talk not of Master Launcelot, father; for the young gentleman, according to Fates and Destinies and such odd sayings, the Sisters Three and such branches of learning, is indeed deceased, or, as you would say in plain terms, gone to heaven.

Gob. Marry, God forbid! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.

support

support

Laun. Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop? Do you know me, father?

club

a post that supports a col-

Gob. Alack the day, I know you not, young gentleman: but, I pray you, tell me, is my boy, God rest his soul, alive or dead?

Laun. Do you not know me, father?

Gob. Alack, sir, I am sand-blind; I know you not.

purblind

Laun. Nay indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son: give me your blessing: truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long; a man's son may, but at the length truth will out.

know

honest

be

Gob. Pray you, sir, stand up: I am sure you are not Launcelot, my boy.

Laun. Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing: I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

confusion

which was

which is

the future

Gob. I cannot think you are my son.

Laun. I know not what I shall think of that: but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man, and I am sure Margery your wife is my mother.

servant

Gob. Her name is Margery, indeed: I'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord worshipped might he be! what a beard hast thou got! thou hast got more hair on thy chin than Dobbin my fill-horse has on his tail.

Shaft or cart-horse

Laun. It should seem, then, that Dobbin's tail grows backward: I am sure he had more hair of his tail than I have of my face when I last saw him.

or

Gob. Lord, how art thou changed! How dost thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a present. How 'gree you now?

Laun. Well, well: but, for mine own part, as I have set up my rest to run away, so I will not rest till I have run some ground. My master's a very Jew: give him a present! give him a halter: I am famished in his service; you may tell every finger I have with my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come: give me your present to one Master Bassanio, who, indeed, gives rare new liveries: if I serve not him, I will run as far as God has any ground. O rare fortune! here comes the man: to him, father; for I am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer.

resolu

arrant rogue

coun

Enter BASSANIO, *with* LEONARDO *and other followers.*

Bass. You may do so; but let it be so hasted that supper be ready at the farthest by five of the clock. See these letters delivered; put the liveries to making, and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging. [*Exit a Servant.*

soon

Laun. To him, father.

Gob. God bless your worship!

Bass. Gramercy! would'st thou aught with me?

much thanks

Gob. Here's my son, sir, a poor boy,—

Laun. Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man; that would, sir, as my father shall specify— Tell you in detail

servant

Gob. He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve,—

wish

the substance in brief

Laun. Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, and have a desire, as my father shall specify.

Gob. His master and he, saving your worship's reverence, are scarce cater-cousins— on good terms with each other

They do not pull on well together

Laun. To be brief, the very truth is that the Jew, having done me wrong, doth cause me, as my father, being, I hope, an old man, shall frutify unto you— certify

Gob. I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your worship, and my suit is— petition; prayer

Laun. In very brief, the suit is impertinent to myself, as concerning [illegible] your worship shall know from by this honest old man; and though I say it, though old man, yet poor man, my father.

Bass. One speak for both. What would you?

Laun. Serve you, sir.

effect; substance

Gob. That is the very defect of the matter, sir.

Bass. I know thee well; thou hast obtain'd thy suit: I agree to take thee in my service
Shylock thy master spoke with me this day,
commended And hath preferr'd thee, if it be preferment promotion
To leave a rich Jew's service, to become
The follower of so poor a gentleman.

Laun. The old proverb is very well divided parted between my master Shylock and you, sir: you have the grace of God, sir, and he hath enough. riches; wealth

Bass. Thou speak'st it well. Go, father, with thy son.
Take leave of thy old master and inquire
My lodging out. Give him a livery
More guarded than his fellows': see it done.

Laun. Father, [illegible] in. I cannot get a service, no; I have ne'er a tongue in my head. Well, if any man in Italy have a [illegible] fairer table which doth offer to swear upon a book, I shall have good fortune. Go to, here's a simple line of life; here's a small trifle of wives: alas, fifteen wives is nothing! eleven widows and nine maids is a simple [illegible] behaviour coming-in for one man: and then to 'scape drowning thrice, and to be in peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed; here are simple 'scapes. Well, if Fortune be a woman, she's a good woman wench for this gear.

in this respect or occasion

Father, come; I'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye.

[*Exeunt Launcelot and old Gobbo.*

Bass. I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this [illegible] and tell you
These things being bought and orderly bestow'd, put in good order on board the ship
Return in haste, for I do feast to-night
My best-esteem'd acquaintance: hie thee, go. hasten

Leon. My best endeavours shall be done herein.

Enter GRATIANO.

Gra. Where is your master?

Leon. Yonder, sir, he walks. [*Exit.*

Gra. Signior Bassanio!

Bass. Gratiano! [illegible]

Gra. I have a suit to you. request

Bass. You have obtain'd it.

Gra. You must not deny me: I must go with you to refuse
Belmont.

Bass. Why, then you must. But hear thee, Gratiano;
Thou art too wild, too rude and bold of voice; quick to [illegible] out-spoken
Parts that become thee happily enough show
And in such eyes as ours appear no faults; friendly eyes
But where thou art not known, why, there they show
Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pain to [illegible] a sober habit
To allay with some cold drops of modesty sober drops
Thy skipping spirit, lest through thy wild behaviour
I be misconstrued in the place I go to quick [illegible]
And lose my hopes.

Gra. Signior Bassanio, hear me:
If I do not put on a sober habit, assume a cloak of sobriety [illegible]
Talk with respect and swear but now and then,
Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely, carry gravely
Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes cover
is being said

Thus with my hat, and sigh and say 'amen,'
Use all the observance of civility, politeness; civilisation
Like one well studied in a sad ostent a grave appearance
To please his grandam, never trust me more.
Bass. Well, we shall see your bearing. behaviour
excuse
Gra. Nay, but I bar to-night: you shall not gauge me
estimate
By what we do to-night.
Bass. No, that were pity:
I would entreat you rather to put on
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends
desire
That purpose merriment. But fare you well:
I have some business.
Gra. And I must to Lorenzo and the rest:
But we will visit you at supper-time. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The same. A room in* SHYLOCK'S *house.*

Enter JESSICA *and* LAUNCELOT.

Jes. I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so:
Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil, jolly fellow
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness. of its bitterness
But fare thee well, there is a ducat for thee:
And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see
Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest:
Give him this letter; do it secretly;
And so farewell: I would not have my father
See me talk with thee.

Laun. Adieu! tears exhibit my tongue. Most beautiful pagan, most sweet Jew, adieu: these foolish drops do something drown my manly spirit: adieu.

Jes. Farewell, good Launcelot. [*Exit Launcelot.*
Alack, what heinous sin is it in me

To be ashamed to be my father's child!
But though I am a daughter to his blood,
I am not to his manners. O Lorenzo,
If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife, by mind being [illegible]
Become a Christian and thy loving wife. [*Exit*. thy father [illegible]

SCENE IV. *The same. A street.*

Enter GRATIANO, LORENZO, SALARINO, *and* SALANIO.

Lor. Nay we will slink away in supper-time, sneak; [illegible]
[illegible] Disguise us at my lodging and return,
All in an hour. during
Gra. We have not made good preparation.
Salar. We have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers. ordered; engag
[illegible] *Salan*. 'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly order'd, cleverly, artful
And better in my mind not undertook.
Lor. 'Tis now but four o'clock: we have two hours
To furnish us.

Enter LAUNCELOT *with a letter*.

Friend Launcelot, what's the news?

Laun. if An it shall please you to unseal; open break up this, it shall seem to signify.

Lor. I know the hand-writing hand: in faith, 'tis a fair hand of paper
And whiter than the paper it writ on
Is the fair hand that writ.
Gra. Love-news, in faith.

Laun. By your leave, sir. permit me to leave you

Lor. Whither goest thou?

Laun. Marry, sir, to bid my old master the Jew to sup to-night with my new master the Christian. Bassanio

look *Lor*. Hold here, take this: tell gentle Jessica This is reward for your pains
I will not fail her; speak it privately.

Come Go, gentlemen, [*Exit Launcelot.*
Will you prepare you for this masque to-night? masquerade
I am provided of a torch-bearer. with
Salar. Ay, marry, I'll be gone about it straight. immediately
Salan. And so will I.
Lor. Meet me and Gratiano
At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence. about an hour
Salar. 'Tis good we do so. [*Exeunt Salar. and Salan.*
Gra. Was not that letter from fair Jessica?
Lor. I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed
How I shall take her from her father's house,
What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with,
msque
al page What page's suit she hath in readiness.
If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven, [illegible]
It will be for his gentle daughter's sake:
And never dare misfortune cross her foot,
nfortune Unless she do it under this excuse, plea
That she is issue to a faithless Jew. daughter
Come, go with me; peruse this as thou goest: read this letter
Fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *The same. Before* SHYLOCK'S *house.*

Enter SHYLOCK *and* LAUNCELOT.

Shy. Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy judge,
The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio:—
What, Jessica!—thou shalt not gormandise, eat voraciously
As thou hast done with me:—What, Jessica!—
And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out;— tear the linings
waste them
Why, Jessica, I say!
Laun. Why, Jessica!
Shy. Who bids thee call? I do not bid thee call.

Laun. Your worship was wont to tell me that I could do nothing without bidding.

Enter JESSICA.

Jes. Call you? what is your will?
Shy. I am bid forth to supper, Jessica: invited to a supper—
There are my keys. But wherefore should I go?
invited
I am not bid for love; they flatter me:
But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon
wasteful The prodigal Christian. Jessica, my girl,
spend-thrift— Look to my house. I am right loath to go. very unwilling
There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest, preparing against peace of mind
For I did dream of money-bags to-night. last night—
come
Laun. I beseech you, sir, go: my young master doth expect your reproach. approach
Shy. So do I his.
to have a masquerade
Laun. And they have conspired together, I will not say you shall see a masque; but if you do, then it was not for nothing that my nose fell a-bleeding on Black-Monday last at six o'clock i' the morning, falling out that year on Ash Wednesday was four year, in the afternoon.
Shy. What, are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica:
Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum
harsh crying And the vile squealing of the wry-neck'd fife,
Clamber not you up to the casements then, windows
Nor thrust your head into the public street
To gaze on Christian fools with varnish'd faces, masked or painted
But stop my house's ears, I mean my casements: windows
Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter stupid frivolity—
My sober house. By Jacob's staff, I swear,
I have no mind of feasing forth to-night: going out to Bassanio's feast—
But I will go. Go you before me, sirrah;
Say I will come.

Laun. I will go before, sir. Mistress, look out at window, for all this ;

There will come a Christian by,
Will be worth a Jewess' eye. very valuable [Exit.

Shy. What says that fool of Hagar's offspring, ha ?
Jes. His words were 'Farewell mistress ;' nothing else.
Shy. The patch is kind enough, but a huge feeder ;
Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day
More than the wild-cat : drones hive not with me ;
Therefore I part with him, and part with him
Bassanio To one that I would have him help to waste
His borrow'd purse. Well, Jessica, go in :
Perhaps I will return immediately :
Do as I bid you ; shut doors after you :
Fast bind, fast find ; goodwatch prevents misfortune
A proverb never stale in thrifty mind. always relished by [Exit.
Jes. Farewell ; and if my fortune be not crost, blasted
I have a father, you a daughter, lost. [Exit.

SCENE VI. *The same.*

Enter GRATIANO *and* SALARINO, *masqued.*

Gra. This is the pent-house under which Lorenzo
Desired us to make stand.
Salar. His hour is almost past. the time when he has undertaken to join us
Gra. And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,
For lovers ever run before the clock.
Salar. O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly
To seal love's bonds new-made, than they are wont
To keep obliged faith unforfeited ! unbroken
Gra. That ever holds : who riseth from a feast
With that keen appetite that he sits down ? Very in always true

Where is the horse that doth untread again
His tedious measures with the unbated fire same zeal.
That he did pace them first? All things that are,
Are with more spirit chased than enjoy'd.
How like a younker or a prodigal
The scarfed bark puts from her native bay, native harbour
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind!
How like the prodigal doth she return,
With over-weather'd ribs and ragged sails,
hungry Lean, rent and beggar'd by the strumpet wind!

Salar. Here comes Lorenzo: more of this hereafter.

Enter LORENZO.

Lor. Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode; delay;
Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait:
When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,
I'll watch as long for you then. Approach; come away
Here dwells my father Jew. Ho! who's within?

Enter JESSICA, *above, in boy's clothes.*

Jes. Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty,
Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue. voice

Lor. Lorenzo, and thy love.

Jes. Lorenzo, certain, and my love indeed,
For who love I so much? And now who knows
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?

Lor. Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou art.

Jes. Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains. trouble
I am glad 'tis night, you do not look on me, can not see
For I am much ashamed of my exchange: transformation into
But love is blind and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit;
For if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformed to a boy. changed into

Lor. Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer.
Jes. What, must I hold a candle to my shames? many faults
shameful acts They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light. & [illegible] frivolous
Why, 'tis an office of discovery, love;
And I should be obscured. with darkness
Lor. So are you, sweet,
Even in the lovely garnish of a boy. dress
But come at once;
For the close night doth play the runaway, dark is fast slipping
And we are stay'd for at Bassanio's feast.
Jes. I will make fast the doors, and gild myself shut
With some more ducats, and be with you straight.
[*Exit above.*
Gra. Now, by my hood, a Gentile and no Jew. one well-born
curse me by God not *Lor.* Beshrew me but I love her heartily;
For she is wise, if I can judge of her,
And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true,
And true she is, as she hath proved herself,
And therefore, like herself, wise, fair and true,
Shall she be placed in my constant soul

Enter JESSICA, *below.*

What, art thou come? On, gentlemen; away!
Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.
[*Exit with Jessica and Salarino.*

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. Who's there?
Gra. Signior Antonio!
Ant. Fie, fie, Gratiano! where are all the rest? Of you [illegible]
'Tis nine o'clock: our friends all stay for you.
No masque to-night: the wind is come about;
Bassanio presently will go aboard:

persons
I have sent twenty out to seek for you.
Gra. I am glad on 't: I desire no more delight
of
Than to be under sail and gone to-night. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *Belmont. A room in* PORTIA'S *house.*

Flourish of cornets. Enter PORTIA, *with the* PRINCE OF MOROCCO, *and their trains.*

Por. Go draw aside the curtains and discover show
The several caskets to this noble prince.
Now make your choice.
Which
Mor. The first, of gold, who this inscription bears,
'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire;'
The second, silver, which this promise carries,
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves;'
pale
This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt, [illegible]
'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.'
How shall I know if I do choose the right?
Por. The one of them contains my picture, prince:
If you choose that, then I am yours withal. with the picture
Mor. Some god direct my judgement! Let me see;
I will survey the inscriptions back again. in the [illegible]
What says this leaden casket?
'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.'
Must give: for what? for lead? hazard for lead?
This casket threatens. Men that hazard all
Do it in hope of fair advantages:
rich
A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross; a worthless base metal
I 'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.
What says the silver with her virgin hue? White Colour
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.'
As much as he deserves! Pause there, Morocco,
And weigh thy value with an even hand: impartially

judge thyself

valued
If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,
Thou dost deserve enough ; and yet enough
May not extend so far as to the lady :
And yet to be afeard of my deserving
Were but a weak disabling of myself. poor underrating
As much as I deserve ! Why, that's the lady :
royal I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,
In graces and in qualities of breeding ;
But more than these, in love I do deserve.
What if I stray'd no further, but chose here ?
Let's see once more this saying graved in gold ; engraved; cu
'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.'
Why, that's the lady ; all the world desires her ;
From the four corners of the earth they come,
To kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing saint : saint-breathing or living like any mortal
The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds boundless wilds
Of wide Arabia are as throughfares now
For princes to come view fair Portia :
Ocean The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head flowing waves
dashes against Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar
To stop the foreign spirits, but they come, the high-spirited foreign princes
As o'er a brook, to see fair Portia. 31-1-17.
casket
One of these three contains her heavenly picture. supremely awe
Is't like that lead contains her ? 'Twere damnation
To think so base a thought : it were too gross lead would gross metal
shroud
To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.
Or shall I think in silver she's immured, buried; contained
Being ten times undervalued to tried gold ? tested; refined
O sinful thought ! Never so rich a gem
Was set in worse than gold. They have in England
A coin that bears the figure of an angel
engraved
Stamped in gold, but that's insculp'd upon; that figure of angel is engraved
But here an angel in a golden bed

Lies all within. Deliver me the key:
Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may!
Por. There, take it, prince; and if my form lie there, image; pictu
Then I am yours. [*He unlocks the golden casket.*
Mor. death's head O hell! what have we here?
A carrion Death, within whose empty eye
scroll paper
There is a written scroll! I'll read the writing.
[*Reads*] All that glisters is not gold;
Often have you heard that told:
Many a man his life hath sold sacrificed, lost
But my outside to behold:
Gilded tombs do worms infold. enclose
Had you been as wise as bold,
Young in limbs, in judgement old,
Your answer had not been inscroll'd: written on the scroll but given in the shape of image of Portia
Fare you well; your suit is cold. [illegible]
Cold, indeed; and labour lost:
Then, farewell, heat, and welcome, frost!
Portia, adieu. I have too grieved a heart
To take a tedious leave: thus losers part. depart
happy deliverance [*Exit with his train. Flourish of cornets.*
Por. A gentle riddance. Draw the curtains, go.
Let all of his complexion choose me so. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII. *Venice. A street.*

Enter SALARINO *and* SALANIO.

Salar. Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail:
With him is Gratiano gone along;
And in their ship I am sure Lorenzo is not.
roused
Salan. The villain Jew with outcries raised the duke, from his bed
Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.

Salar. He came too late, the ship was under sail:
But there the duke was given to understand
small boat That in a gondola were seen together
Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica: love-sick
Besides, Antonio certified the duke
They were not with Bassanio in his ship.
anger
Salan. I never heard a passion so confused,
extravagant
So strange, outrageous, and so variable,
As the dog Jew did utter in the streets:
'My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!
Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats!
Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!
A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,
Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter!
And jewels, two stones, two rich and precious stones,
Stolen by my daughter! Justice! find the girl;
She hath the stones upon her. and the ducats.'
Salar. Why, all the boys in Venice follow him, ridicule him by mimicking his cry
Crying, his stones, his daughter, and his ducats.
Salan. Let good Antonio look he keep his day,
Or he shall pay for this.
Salar. Marry, well remember'd.
talked I reason'd with a Frenchman yesterday,
Who told me, in the narrow seas that part the English Channel
The French and English, there miscarried was wrecked or lost
A vessel of our country richly fraught: carrying a rich cargo
of
I thought upon Antonio when he told me,
And wished in silence that it were not his. in my heart of hearts
Salan. You were best to tell Antonio what you hear;
Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him.
Salar. A kinder gentleman treads not the earth. does not live upon; is not to be found
I saw Bassanio and Antonio part: take leave
Bassanio told him he would make some speed

Of his return : he answer'd, 'Do not so ;
spoil
Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio,
But stay the very riping of the time ;
And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me, from
Let it not enter in your mind of love : loving mind
Be merry, and employ your chiefest thoughts
To courtship and such fair ostents of love displays or demonstrations love
As shall conveniently become you there :' suit-; befit-
And even there, his eye being big with tears, filled
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
wonderfully
And with affection wondrous sensible sensitive; touched; mov
He wrung Bassanio's hand ; and so they parted.

Salan. I think he only loves the world for him.
I pray thee, let us go and find him out
And quicken his embraced heaviness Relieve the heaviness which
With some delight or other. he so fondly hugs

Salar. Do we so. [*Exeunt.* 3-2-1

SCENE IX. *Belmont.* *A room in* PORTIA'S *house.*

Enter NERISSA *with a* Servitor.

Ner. Quick, quick, I pray thee ; draw the curtain straight :
The Prince of Arragon hath ta'en his oath,
And comes to his election presently. choice

Flourish of cornets. *Enter the* PRINCE OF ARRAGON,
PORTIA, *and their trains.*

Por. Behold, there stand the caskets, noble prince :
If you choose that wherein I am contain'd,
Straight shall our nuptial rites be solemnized :
But if you fail, without more speech, my lord, any further word
You must be gone from hence immediately.

Arr. I am enjoin'd by oath to observe three things :
First, never to unfold to any one
Which casket 'twas I chose ; next, if I fail
to choose Of the right casket, never in my life
To woo a maid in way of marriage :
Lastly,
If I do fail in fortune of my choice,
Immediately to leave you and be gone.

Por. To these injunctions every one doth swear
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

prepared *Arr.* And so have I address'd me. Fortune now lead me
To my heart's hope ! Gold ; silver ; and base lead.
'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.'
You shall look fairer, ere I give or hazard.
What says the golden chest ? ha ! let me see :
'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.'
What many men desire ! that 'many' may be meant meant f
foolish
By the fool multitude, that choose by show,
Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach ;
the fond eye Which pries not to the interior, but, like the martlet, appearances
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,
Even in the force and road of casualty. accidents
I will not choose what many men desire,
Because I will not jump with common spirits agree
And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.
Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house ; chest
Tell me once more what title thou dost bear :
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves :'
And well said too ; for who shall go about
cheat To cozen fortune and be honourable get honours
Without the stamp of merit ? Let none presume
To wear an undeserved dignity.
O, that estates, degrees and offices
ranks
dignity, status

obtained in corrupt ways
Were not derived corruptly, and that clear honour pure unsullied reputation
Were purchased by the merit of the wearer!
How many then should cover, that stand bare! bareheaded
would be servants
How many be commanded that command!
manners
How much low peasantry would then be glean'd picked out ; sif
From the true seed of honour! and how much honour
trash
Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times
To be new-varnished! Well, but to my choice: dressed afresh with new hon
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.'
claim that which I deserve
I will assume desert. Give me a key for this,
And instantly unlock my fortunes here.

[*He opens the silver casket.*

Por. Too long a pause for that which you find there.

Arr. What's here? the portrait of a blinking idiot,
Presenting me a schedule! I will read it. Scroll, a piece of writing
How much unlike art thou to Portia!
How much unlike my hopes and my deservings!
'Who chooseth me shall have as much as he deserves.'
Did I deserve no more than a fool's head?
Is that my prize? are my deserts no better? merits ; deservings

Por. To offend, and judge, are distinct offices contrary
And of opposed natures.

Arr. What is here?

[*Reads*] The fire seven times tried this silver
is found tried Seven times tried that judgement is,
That did never choose amiss. arrived at a wrong concl
Some there be that shadows kiss; kiss delusions
Such have but a shadow's bliss: delusive happiness
There be fools alive, I wis, I know
having a head of white hairs Silver'd o'er; and so was this. [illegible]
Take what wife you will to bed, [illegible]
I will ever be your head:
So be gone: you are sped. dismissed

greater
Still more fool I shall appear
By the time I linger here :
With one fool's head I came to woo,
But I go away with two.
Sweet, adieu. I w'll keep my oath,
Patiently to bear my wroth. misfortune; calamity

[*Exeunt Arragon and train.*

Por. Thus hath the candle singed the moth. burnt
O, these deliberate fools ! when they do choose,
They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

proverb
Ner. The ancient saying is no heresy, not untrue, heresy
marrying Hanging and wiving goes by destiny. of truth will

Por. Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Where is my lady ?

Por. Here : what would my lord ?

Serv. Madam, there is alighted at your gate
A young Venetian, one that comes before
To signify the approching of his lord ; Bassanio
From whom he bringeth sensible regreets, tangible gifts
commendations
namely To wit, besides commends and courteous breath, words
Gifts of rich value. Yet I have not seen up to this time
promising So likely an ambassador of love :
A day in April never came so sweet,
gorgeous To show how costly summer was at hand,
As this fore-spurrer comes before his lord. messenger

Por. No more, I pray thee : I am half afeard
Thou wilt say anon he is some kin to thee, related
Thou spend'st such high-day wit in praising him. high-flown extravagant compliments
Come, come, Nerissa ; for I long to see
Quick Cupid's post that comes so mannerly.

Ner. Bassanio, lord Love, if thy will it be ! [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Venice. A street.*

Enter SALANIO *and* SALARINO.

Salan. Now, what news, on the Rialto?

Salar. Why, yet it lives there unchecked that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wrecked on the narrow seas; the Goodwins, I think they call the place; a very dangerous flat and fatal, where the carcases of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip Report be an honest woman of her word. as regards

uncontradicted
cargo
the English channel
the Goodwin sands on the coast of Thames
framework of ship's hulls
lofty
rumour

Salan. I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapped ginger or made her neighbours believe she wept for the death of a third husband. But it is true, without any slips of prolixity or crossing the plain highway of talk, that the good Antonio, the honest Antonio,——O that I had a title good enough to keep his name company!—

wish
nibbled
in plain language

Salar. Come, the full stop.

Salan. Ha! what sayest thou? Why, the end is, he hath lost a ship.

Salar. I would it might prove the end of his losses.

Salan. Let me say 'amen' betimes, lest the devil cross my prayer, for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.

in good time
interrupt

Enter SHYLOCK.

How now, Shylock! what news among the merchants?

Shy. You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter's flight.

knew
knew
as

Salar. That's certain: I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal.

Salan. And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledged; and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam.

marriageable
nature; disposition

Shy. She is damned for it.

Salar. That's certain, if the devil may be her judge.

Shy. My own flesh and blood to rebel! carnal desires

Salan. Out upon it, old carrion! rebels it at these years?

Shy. I say, my daughter is my flesh and blood.

Salar. There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than between jet and ivory: more between your bloods than there is between red wine and Rhenish. But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?

Shy. There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar, that was used to come so smug upon the mart; let him look to his bond: he was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond: he was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; let him look to his bond.

bargain

was accustomed

show affection dress smart

Salar. Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh: what's that good for?

breaks his day

Shy. To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why,

frustrated; prevented

limbs

titillating

revenge. The villany you teach me, I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Gentlemen, my master Antonio is at his house and desires to speak with you both.

Salar. We have been up and down to seek him.

Enter TUBAL.

Salan. Here comes another of the tribe: a third cannot be matched, unless the devil himself turn Jew.

[*Exeunt Salan., Salar., and Servant.*

Shy. How now, Tubal! what news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter?

Tub. I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

Shy. Why, there, there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now; two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them? Why, so: and I know not what's spent in the search: why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge: nor no ill luck stirring but what lights on my shoulders; no sighs but of my breathing; no tears but of my shedding.

Tub. Yes, other men have ill luck too: Antonio, as I heard in Genoa,—

Shy. What, what, what? ill luck? ill luck?

Tub. Hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.

Shy. I thank God, I thank God. Is't true, is't true?

Tub. I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wreck.

Shy. I thank thee, good Tubal: good news, good news! ha, ha! where? in Genoa?

Tub. Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, in one night fourscore ducats.

Shy. Thou stickest a dagger in me: I shall never see my gold again: fourscore ducats at a sitting! fourscore ducats!

Tub. There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

Shy. I am very glad of it: I'll plague him; I'll torture him: I am glad of it.

Tub. One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

Shy. Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal: it was my turquoise: I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

Tub. But Antonio is certainly undone.

Shy. Nay, that's true, that's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for, were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will. Go, go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal: at our synagogue, Tubal.

[*Exeunt*

SCENE II. *Belmont A room in* PORTIA'S *house.*

Enter BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, NERISSA, *and* Attendants.

Por. I pray you, tarry: pause a day or two
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong, if you choose wrongly
I lose your company: therefore forbear awhile.

There's something tells me, but it is not love,
I would not lose you; and you know yourself,
Hate counsels not in such a quality. [illegible]
But lest you should not understand me well,—
And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought,—
I would detain you here some month or two
Before you venture for me. I could teach you
How to choose right, but I am then forsworn; then [illegible] myself
So will I never be: so may you miss me; if I do not forswear
But if you do, you 'll make me wish a sin, I will tell you then [illegible]
That I had been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes, a curse upon
They have o'erlook'd me and divided me; bewitched
One half of me is yours, the other half yours,
Mine own, I would say; but if mine, then yours,
And so all yours. O, these naughty times
Put bars between the owners and their rights!
And so, though yours, not yours. Prove it so, [illegible]
Let fortune go to hell for it, not I. [illegible]
I speak too long; but 'tis to peize the time, delay
To eke it, and to draw it out in length,
To stay you from election.
Bass. Let me choose;
For as I am, I live upon the rack.
Por. Upon the rack, Bassanio! then confess
What treason there is mingled with your love.
Bass. None but that ugly treason of mistrust, [illegible]
Which makes me fear the enjoying of my love: i.e. life or
There may as well be amity and life [illegible]
'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love.
Por. Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,
Where men enforced do speak anything. even by
Bass. Promise me life, and I'll confess the truth.
Por. Well then, confess and live.

Bass. sum Total 'Confess' and 'love'
Had been the very sum of my confession :
O happy torment, when my torturer
Doth teach me answers for deliverance !
But let me to my fortune and the caskets.
Por. Away, then ! I am lock'd in one of them :
If you do love me, you will find me out.
Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.
Let music sound while he doth make his choice ;
Bassanio
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
Fading in music : that the comparison
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream
And watery death-bed for him. He may win ;
And what is music then ? Then music is
of trumpet
Even as the flourish when true subjects bow
To a new-crowned monarch : such it is
As are those dulcet sounds in break of day
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear sleeping
And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,
the same
With no less presence, but with much more love,
Then young Alcides, when he did redeem
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy sorrowful
To the sea-monster : I stand for sacrifice ;
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives, Trojan
With bleared visages, come forth to view
The issue of the exploit. Go, Hercules !
Live thou, I live : with much much more dismay
I view the fight than thou that makest the fray.

Music, whilst BASSANIO *comments on the caskets to himself.*

SONG.

Tell me where is fancy bred, born
affection Or in the heart or in the head ? judgment
how How begot, how nourished ?
Reply, reply.
It is engender'd in the eyes ; how
With gazing fed ; and fancy dies nourished
birthplace of eyes In the cradle where it lies.
Let us all ring fancy's knell :
I'll begin it,—Ding, dong, bell.

All. Ding, dong, bell.

Bass. So may the outward shows be least themselves :
The world is still deceived with ornament.
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt cause, defence
But, being season'd with a gracious voice, flavoured, made palatable
Obscures the show of evil ? In religion,
What damned error, but some sober brow
Will bless it and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament ?
There is no vice so simple but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts : its
How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins
The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars,
Who, inward search'd, have livers white as milk ; are genuine cowards
And these assume but valour's excrement
To render them redoubted ! Look on beauty,
And you shall see 'tis purchased by the weight ;
Which therein works a miracle in nature,
Making them lightest that wear most of it :
So are those crisped snaky golden locks curled
Which make such wanton gambols with the wind,

Upon supposed fairness, often known
To be the dowry of a second head,
The skull that bred them in the sepulchre. grave
Thus ornament is but the guiled shore guileful shore
To a most dangerous sea ; the beauteous scarf handsome veil
Veiling an Indian beauty ; in a word, briefly
The seeming truth which cunning times put on crafty
To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold, showy
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee ;
Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge slave
'Tween man and man : but thou, thou meagre lead,
Which rather threatenest than dost promise aught,
Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence ;
And here choose I : joy be the consequence !

Por. [*Aside*] How all the other passions fleet to air,
As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embraced despair,
And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy !
O love, be moderate ; allay thy ecstasy ;
In measure rain thy joy ; scant this excess allay
I feel too much thy blessing : make it less,
For fear I surfeit. fill to satiety & disgust

Bass. What find I here ?

portrait ; likeness [*Opening the leaden casket.*

Fair Portia's counterfeit ! What demi god
Hath come so near creation ? Move these eyes ?
Or whether, riding on the balls of mine, moving
Seem they in motion ? Here are sever'd lips, open
Parted with sugar breath : so sweet a bar breath
Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her hairs
The painter plays the spider and hath woven
A golden mesh to entrap the hearts of men
Faster than gnats in cobwebs : but her eyes,—

How could he see to do them? having made one,
Methinks it should have power to steal both his blind both his eyes
And leave itself unfurnish'd. Yet look, how far
The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow portrait
undervaluing
In underprizing it, so far this shadow
fall behind
Doth limp behind the substance. Here 's the scroll, the real, original being Portia
The continent and summary of my fortune.
[*Reads*] You that choose not by the view, the mere external
Chance as fair and choose as true!
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content and seek no new.
If you be well pleased with this
And hold your fortune for your bliss, happiness
Turn you where your lady is
And claim her with a loving kiss.
A gentle scroll. Fair lady, by your leave;
I come by note, to give and to receive.
Like one of two contending in a prize, a prize fighter
That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,
Hearing applause and universal shout,
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt
Whether those peals of praise be his or no,
So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so;
As doubtful whether what I see be true,
Uutil confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.
Por. You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,
Such as I am: though for myself alone
I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish myself much better; yet, for you
I would be trebled twenty times myself;
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times
More rich;
That only to stand high in your account. esteem, consideration

4

I wish I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends, possessions, fortu
measure Exceed account; but the full sum of me
Is sum of—nothing, which, to term in gross, to name generally
not in detail
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractised; inexperienced
Happy in this, she is not yet so old
that But she may learn; happier than this,
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;
Happiest of all is that her gentle spirit obedient
Commits itself to yours to be directed,
As from her lord, her governor, her king.
Myself and what is mine to you and yours
changed Is now converted: but now I was the lord only a little while ago
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now, [illegible]
This house, these servants and this same myself same self of mine
Are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring;
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love
opportunity And be my vantage to exclaim on you. chide, cry out against
Bass. Madam, you have bereft me of all words, deprived
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins,
And there is such confusion in my powers, faculties
As, after some oration fairly spoken
By a beloved prince, there doth appear
Among the buzzing pleased multitude;
Where every something, being blent together, blended
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy, wilderness of [illegible]
Express'd and not express'd. But when this ring
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence: my body
O, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead!
Ner. My lord and lady, it is now our time,
That have stood by and seen our wishes prosper,
To cry, good joy: good joy, my lord and lady!

Gra. My lord Bassanio and my gentle lady,
I wish you all the joy that you can wish ; for yourselves
For I am sure you can wish none from me : enough [illegible]
And when your honours mean to solemnize away from me any [illegible]
marriage The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you, that I may seek for myself.
Even at that time I may be married too.
Bass. With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife.
Gra. I thank your lordship, you have got me one. by thy [illegible] along with [illegible]
My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours :
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid ; Nerissa
You loved, I loved ; for intermission delay
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you. belongs
Your fortune stood upon the casket there, depended
And so did mine too, as the matter falls ; and the wooing [illegible]
For wooing here until I sweat again,
And swearing till my very roof was dry roof of my mouth
With oaths of love, at last, if promise last, the
I got a promise of this fair one here
To have her love, provided that your fortune
Achieved her mistress.
Por. Is this true, Nerissa ?
Ner. Madam, it is, so you stand pleased withal. and with it
Bass. And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith ?
Gra. Yes, faith, my lord.
Bass. Our feast shall be much honour'd in your marriage.
Gra. But who comes here ? Lorenzo and his infidel ? Jewish lady-love Jessica
What, and my old Venetian friend Salanio ?
Enter LORENZO, JESSICA, *and* SALANIO.
Bass. Lorenzo and Salanio, welcome hither ;
If that the youth of my new interest here my [illegible] Portia's house
Have power to bid you welcome. By your leave, authority
I bid my very friends and countrymen; true
Sweet Portia, welcome.

Por. So do I, my lord:
They are entirely welcome. most heartily
Lor. I thank your honour. For my part, my lord,
My purpose was not to have seen you here;
But meeting with Salanio by the way,
He did intreat me, past all saying nay, beyond my power of denying him
To come with him along.
Salan. I did, my lord;
And I have reason for it. Signor Antonio
Commends him to you. sends you his greetings [*Gives Bassanio a letter.*
Bass. Ere I ope his letter,
I pray you, tell me how my good friend doth. fares
Salan. Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind;
Nor well, unless in mind: his letter there 28-2-17
Will show you his estate. present condition general
Gra. Nerissa, cheer yon stranger; bid her welcome.
Your hand, Salanio; what is the news from Venice?
How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio?
I know he will be glad of our success;
We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.
Salan. I would you had won the fleece that he lost.
mischievous, unpleasant, evil
Por. There are some shrewd contents in yon same paper,
That steals the colour from Bassanio's cheek: [illegible]
Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world
alter
Could turn so much the constitution mind, temper
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse! [illegible]
With leave, Bassanio; I am half yourself,
whatever
And I must freely have the half of anything, unconditionally
That this same paper brings you.
Bass. O sweet Portia,
Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words
That ever blotted paper! Gentle lady, [illegible]
When I did first impart my love to you,

I freely told you, all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins, I was a gentleman;
And then I told you true: and yet, dear lady,
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see
How much I was a braggart. When I told you vain boaster
My state was nothing, I should then have told you
That I was worse than nothing; for, indeed, worth minus zero
I have engaged myself to a dear friend, put myself out to
Engaged my friend to his mere enemy,
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady;
The paper as the body of my friend,
And every word in it a gaping wound, yawning!
Issuing life-blood. But is it true, Salanio?
Have all his ventures fail'd? What, not one hit? success
From Tripolis, from Mexico and England,
From Lisbon, Barbary and India?
And not one vessel 'scape the dreadful touch
Of merchant-marring rocks? fatal to merchants

Salan. Not one, my lord.
Besides, it should appear, that if he had
The present money to discharge the Jew, pay off
He would not take it. Never did I know
A creature, that did bear the shape of man,
So keen and greedy to confound a man: destroy
He plies the duke at morning and at night,
And doth impeach the freedom of the state,
If they deny him justice: twenty merchants,
The duke himself, and the magnificoes grandees, chief men
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him; argued
But none can drive him from the envious plea dislodge
Of forfeiture, of justice and his bond.

Jes. When I was with him I have heard him swear
To Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen,

That he would rather have Antonio's flesh
Than twenty times the value of the sum
That he did owe him : and I know, my lord,
If law, authority and power deny not,
It will go hard with poor Antonio.

Por. Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble ?

Bass. The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best-condition'd and unwearied spirit nature
In doing courtesies, and one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

Por. What sum owes he the Jew ?

Bass. For me three thousand ducats.

Por. cancel What, no more ?
Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond ;
Double six thousand, and then treble that,
Before a friend of this description account
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.
First go with me to church and call me wife,
And then away to Venice to your friend ;
For never shall you lie by Portia's side
With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold
To pay the petty debt twenty times over :
When it is paid, bring your true friend along.
My maid Nerissa and myself meantime
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away !
For you shall hence upon your wedding-day :
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer :
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

Bass. [*Reads*] Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit ; and since in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and I, if I might but see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use your pleasure: if your love [illegible] do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.

Por. O love, dispatch all business, and be gone!

Bass. Since I have your good leave to go away,
I will make haste: but, till I come again,
No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay,
No rest be interposer 'twixt us twain. [*Exeunt.*

I shall have [illegible]

SCENE III. *Venice. A street.*

Enter SHYLOCK, SALARINO, ANTONIO *and* Gaoler.

Shy. Gaoler, look to him: tell not me of mercy;
This is the fool that lent out money gratis:
Gaoler, look to him.

Ant. Hear me yet, good Shylock.

Shy. I'll have my bond; speak not against my bond:
I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond.
Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause;
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs:
The duke shall grant me justice. I do wonder,
Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond
To come abroad with him at his request.

Ant. I pray thee, hear me speak.

Shy. I'll have my bond; I will not hear thee speak:
I'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more.
I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield
To Christian intercessors. Follow not;
I'll have no speaking: I will have my bond. [*Exit.*

Salar. It is the most impenetrable cur
That ever kept with men.

lived with human society

Ant. Let him alone :
I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers. fruitless, useless, unprofitable
He seeks my life ; his reason well I know :
I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures
Many that have at times made moan to me ; Complained to me represented their sad case to me
Therefore he hates me.
Salar. I am sure the duke
Will never grant this forfeiture to hold. stand
Ant. The duke cannot deny the course of law :
For the commodity that strangers have carry
With us in Venice, if it be denied, law
impair Will much impeach the justice of the state ;
Since that the trade and profit of the city profitable trade
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go :
These griefs and losses have so abated me, lessened my weight
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh emaciated
To-morrow to my bloody creditor.
Well, gaoler, on. Pray God, Bassanio come
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not ! [*Exeunt*

SCENE IV. *Belmont. A room in* PORTIA'S *house.*

Enter PORTIA, NERISSA, LORENZO, JESSICA, *and* BALTHASAR.

Lor. Madam, although I speak it in your presence,
You have a noble and a true conceit idea
Of god-like amity ; which appears most strongly apparently
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.
But if you knew to whom you show this honour,
How true a gentleman you send relief;
How dear a lover of my lord your husband,
master
I know you would be prouder of the work
ordinary [illegible] oblige
Than customary bounty can enforce you.

Por. I never did repent for doing good,
weaver
Nor shall not now : for in companions intimate friends
associate
That do converse and waste the time together,
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love, who are equally fond of each other. Who love each other equally.
closely similar
There must be needs a like proportion
outward appearance
Of lineaments, of manners and of spirit ;
Which makes me think that this Antonio,
Being the bosom lover of my lord,
Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,
sacrifice
How little is the cost I have bestow'd
In purchasing the semblance of my soul Antonio who resembles my husband Bassanio who is my soul
From out the state of hellish misery !
This comes too near the praising of myself ; look like myself like self praise,
Therefore no more of it : hear other things.
entrust
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands
care
The husbandry and manage of my house arrangement
Until my lord's return : for mine own part, as for myself
I have toward heaven breathed a secret vow
To live in prayer and contemplation, divine meditation
Only attended by Nerissa here,
Until her husband and my lord's return :
There is a monastery two miles off ; connected with nunnery
And there will we abide. I do desire you
Not to deny this imposition, say me nay
The which my love and some necessity
Now lays upon you. imposes upon
Lor. Madam, with all my heart ;
I shall obey you in all fair commands. [illegible]
Por. My people do already know my mind,
And will acknowledge you and Jessica respect
In place of Lord Bassanio and myself.
And so farewell, till we shall meet again.
Lor. Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you !

Jes. I wish your ladyship all heart's content.
Por. I thank you for your wish, and am well pleased
in turn To wish it back on you : fare you well, Jessica.
[*Exeunt Jessica and Lorenzo.*
Now, Balthasar,
As I have ever found thee honest-true,
So let me find thee still. always Take this same letter,
And use thou all the endeavour of a man
In speed to Padua : see thou render this deliver this letter
Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario ;
And, look, what notes and garments he doth give thee,
Bring them, I pray thee, with imagined speed imaginable haste
Unto the tranect, to the common ferry
Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,
But get thee gone : I shall be there before thee.
Balth. Madam, I go with all convenient speed. [*Exit.*
Por. Come on, Nerissa ; I have work in hand
That you yet know not of : we 'll see our husbands
Before they think of us. very soon
Ner. Shall they see us ?
Por. They shall, Nerissa ; but in such a habit, dress
That they shall think we are accomplished
With that we lack. I'll hold thee any wager,
When we are both accoutred like young men, dressed
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
And wear my dagger with the braver grace,
And speak between the change of man and boy
With a shrill reed voice, and turn two mincing steps affected
Into the a manly stride, and speak of frays quarrels
Like a fine bragging youth, and tell quaint lies,
How honourable ladies sought my love,
Which I denying, they fell sick and died ;
I could not do withal ; then I 'll repent,

And wish, for all that, that I had not kill'd them ;
And twenty of these pūny lies I 'll tell, small petty
That men shall swear I have discontinued school left
Above a twelvemonth. I have within my mind think of
A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks, useless
Which I will practise. completely
But come, I'll tell thee all my whole device plot, contrivance
When I am in my coach, which stays for us
At the park gate ; and therefore haste away,
For we must measure twenty miles to-day. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *The same. A garden.*

Enter LAUNCELOT *and* JESSICA.

Laun. Yes, truly ; for, look you, the sins of the father are to be laid upon the children : therefore, I promise ye, I fear you. I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my agitation of the matter ; therefore be of good cheer, for truly I think you are damned. There is but one hope in it that can do you any good ; and that is but a kind of bastard hope neither.

Jes. And what hope is that, I pray thee ?

Laun. Marry, you may partly hope you are not the Jew's daughter.

Jes. That were a kind of bastard hope, indeed : so the sins of my mother should be visited upon me.

Laun. Truly then I fear you are damned both by father and mother : thus when I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother : well, you are gone both ways.

Jes. I shall be saved by my husband ; he hath made me a Christian.

Laun. Truly, the more to blame he : we were Christians enow before ; e'en as many as could well live, one by another.

porkes

This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs : if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money. for any amount of money

Enter LORENZO.

Jes. I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say : here he comes.

Lor. I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Launcelot, if you thus get my wife into corners.

directly

Jes. Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo : Launcelot and I are out. He tells me flatly, there is no mercy for me in heaven, because I am a Jew's daughter : and he says, you are no good member of the commonwealth, for in converting Jews to Christians, you raise the price of pork.

servants

Lor. Go in, sirrah ; bid them prepare for dinner. 7-3-17

Laun. That is done, sir ; they have all stomachs. hungry

Lor. Goodly Lord, what a wit-snapper are you ! then bid them prepare dinner.

Laun. That is done too, sir ; only 'cover' is the word.

Lor. Will you cover then, sir ?

Laun. Not so, sir, neither ; I know my duty.

Lor. Yet more quarrelling with occasion ! Wilt thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant ? I pray thee, understand a plain man in his plain meaning : go to thy fellows ; bid them cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner.

whims fancies

Laun. For the table, sir, it shall be served in ; for the meat, sir, it shall be covered ; for your coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as humours and conceits shall govern. [illegible] [Exit.

discrimination

Lor. O dear discretion, how his words are suited ! [illegible]
The fool hath planted in his memory
An army of good words ; and I do know

A many fools, that stand in better place,
Garnish'd like him, that for a tricksy word quibble
Defy the matter. How cheer'st thou, Jessica ? contemptuously
And now, good sweet, say thy opinion,
How dost thou like the Lord Bassanio's wife ?
Jes. Past all expressing. It is very meet proper
The Lord Bassanio live an upright life ;
For, having such a blessing in his lady,
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth ;
And if on earth he do not mean it, then
In reason he should never come to heaven.
Why, if two gods should play some heavenly match
And on the wager lay two earthly women,
And Portia one, there must be something else
Pawn'd with the other, for the poor rude world
Hath not her fellow.
Lor. Even such a husband
Hast thou of me as she is for a wife.
Jes. Nay, but ask my opinion too of that.
Lor. I will anon : first, let us go to dinner.
Jes. Nay, let me praise you while I have a stomach. inclination
Lor. No, pray thee, let it serve for table-talk ;
Then, howsoe'er thou speak'st, 'mong other things
I shall digest it.
Jes. Well, I'll set you forth. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Venice. A court of justice.*

Enter the DUKE, *the* Magnificoes, ANTONIO, BASSANIO, GRATIANO, SALERIO, *and others.*

Duke. What, is Antonio here?
Ant. Ready, so please your grace.
Duke. I am sorry for thee: thou art come to answer face
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch cruel
Uncapable of pity, void and empty
or From any dram of mercy. drop
Ant. I have heard
temper
Your grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify soften; modera
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate hardened heart
And that no lawful means can carry me
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose malice
My patience to his fury, and am arm'd with
To suffer, with a quietness of spirit, Calm fortitude
The very tyranny and rage of his. cruel violence
Duke. Go one and call the Jew into the court.
Saler. He is ready at the door: he comes, my lord.

Enter SHYLOCK.

Duke. Make room, and let him stand before our face.
Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice way
To the last hour of act; and then 'tis thought
Thou 'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange pity
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty; unexpected
And where thou now exact'st the penalty,
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,
[illegible]
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture, the penalty of a pound of flesh
But, touch'd with human gentleness and love,

portion
Forgive a moiety of the principal;
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses, look with pity
That have of late so huddled on his back, overwhelmed him
nough Enow to press a royal merchant down
to
And pluck commiseration of his state pity
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never train'd
To offices of tender courtesy. by doing kind & gentle acts
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.
told
Shy. I have possess'd your grace of what I purpose;
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond:
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter and your city's freedom.
You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion flesh than to receive a pound of dead & rotten flesh
Three thousand ducats: I'll not answer that:
ancy But, say, it is my humour: is it answer'd?
What if my house be troubled with a rat
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats
To have it baned? What, are you answer'd yet? does that answer
Some men there are love not a gaping pig; a squealing
Some, that are mad if they behold a cat;
Some, when they hear the bagpipe; for affection,
Mistress of passion, sways it to the mood passion
Of what it likes or loathes. Now, for your answer:
As there is no firm reason to be render'd,
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig; endure
Why he, a woolen bag-pipe; but of force perforce
Must yield to such inevitable shame
As to offend, himself being offended;
Why he, a harmless necessary cat;
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,

settled fixed
More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus
A losing suit against him. Are you answer'd?
Bass. This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,
flow
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.
Shy. I am not bound to please thee with my answers.
Bass. Do all men kill the things they do not love?
Shy. Hates any man the thing he would not kill?
Bass. Every offence is not a hate at first.
Shy. What, would'st thou have a serpent sting thee twice?
seemingly
Ant. I pray you, think you question with the Jew: arguing
You may as well go stand upon the beach
sea
And bid the main flood bate his usual height; not come up as high
argue You may as well use question with the wolf
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb; cry piteously
You may as well forbid the mountain pines
shake To wag their high tops and to make no noise,
agitated
When they are fretted with the gusts of heaven;
You may as well do any thing most hard,
As seek to soften that—than which what's harder?—
His Jewish heart: therefore, I do beseech you,
Make no more offers, use no farther means,
But with all brief and plain conveniency suitable promptitude
Let me have judgement and the Jew his will.
Bass. For thy three thousand ducats here is six.
Shy. If every ducat in six thousand ducats
Were in six parts and every part a ducat,
take
I would not draw them; I would have my bond.
Duke. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?
Shy. What judgement shall I dread, doing no wrong?
You have among you many a purchased slave,
them Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish parts, low menial duties

Because you bought them : shall I say to you,
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?
Why sweat they under burthens? let their beds
Be made as soft as yours and let their palates
ratifie Be season'd with such viands? You will answer food as you eat yourself
'The slaves are ours :' so do I answer you :
The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,
Is dearly bought ; 'tis mine and I will have it.
If you deny me, fie upon your law!
There is no force in the decrees of Venice. laws
nsist upon I stand for judgement : answer ; shall I have it?

Duke. Upon my power I may dismiss this court,
relying upon
Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,
Whom I have sent for to determine this, decide
Come here to-day.

Saler. My Lord, here stays without wait outside
A messenger with letters from the doctor,
New come from Padua.

Duke. Bring us the letters ; call the messenger.

Bass. Good cheer, Antonio! What, man, courage yet! do not
The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all, lose heart or
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood. dejected cheer up

Ant. I am a tainted wether of the flock, diseased ram
Meetest for death : the weakest kind of fruit
Drops earliest to the ground ; and so let me :
You cannot better be employ'd, Bassanio,
Than to live still and write mine epitaph. remain live

Enter NERISSA, *dressed like a lawyer's clerk.*

Duke. Came you from Padua, from Bellario?

Ner. From both, my lord. Bellario greets your grace.
ordinarily Place [*Presenting a letter.*

Bass. Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?

Shy. To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.
Gra. Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew, (the leather
Thou makest thy knife keen; but no metal can,
executioner No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness
cruel hatred Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee?
Shy. No, none that thou hast wit enough to make. wisdom
Gra. O, be thou damn'd, inexecrable dog! beyond a past all cursing
And for thy life let justice be accused.
Thou almost makest me waver in my faith loose my attachment of faith Christianity
To hold opinion with Pythagoras,
That souls of animals infuse themselves come to reside
Into the trunks of men: thy currish spirit malicious
Govern'd a wolf, who, hang'd for human slaughter,
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet, cruel leave the body
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallow'd dam, the unholy womb of thy wicked mother
Infused itself in thee; for thy desires
Are wolvish, bloody, starved and ravenous. hungry
Shy. Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud:
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall
To cureless ruin. I stand here for law.
Duke. This letter from Bellario doth commend
A young and learned doctor to our court.
Where is he?
Ner. He attendeth here hard by,
To know your answer, whether you 'll admit him.
Duke. With all my heart. Some three or four of you
Go give him courteous conduct to this place.
Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's letter.

Clerk. [*Reads*] Your grace shall understand that at the time of the receipt of your letter I am very sick: but in the instant that your messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthasar. I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turned o'er many books together: he is furnished with my opinion; which, bettered with his own learning, the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend, comes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your grace's request in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation; for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his commendation.

improve
earnest request
place
youth
have
hindrance
full of opinion
quality being tested

Duke. You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes:
And here, I take it, is the doctor come.

Enter PORTIA, *dressed like a doctor of laws*.

Give me your hand. Came you from old Bellario?
Por. I did, my lord.
Duke. You are welcome: take your place.
Are you acquainted with the difference dispute
That holds this present question in the court? forming the subject of the trial
Por. I am informed thoroughly of the cause.
Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?
Duke. Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.
Por. Is your name Shylock?
Shy. Shylock is my name.
Por. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;
Yet in such rule that the Venetian law regular
Cannot impugn you as you do proceed. oppose
You stand within his danger, do you not? the danger = power of his persecution malice
Ant. Ay, so he says.
Por. Do you confess the bond?
Ant. I do.
Por. Then must the Jew be merciful.
Shy. On what compulsion must I? tell me that.

Por. The quality of mercy is not strained; forced
falls It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath ; it is twice blest ; individual [illegible]
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes : capacity [illegible]
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest : it becomes adorns
The throned monarch better than his crown ;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power, earthly
The attribute to awe and majesty, awful or awe-inspiring
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings ; majesty
But mercy is above this sceptred sway ; superior
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself ;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew, temper
Though justice be thy plea, consider this, demand
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation : we do pray for mercy ;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render human
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea ;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

Shy. My deeds upon my head ! I crave the law,—
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

Por. Is he not able to discharge the money ? debt

Bass. Yes, here I tender it for him in the court ;
Yea, twice the sum : if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart :
If this will not suffice, it must appear a malicious Jew opposing
That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you, the [illegible]
Wrest once the law to your authority :
To do a great right, do a little wrong,

check
And curb this cruel devil of his will. in question of —
Por. It must not be; there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree established, established, prescribed
'Twill be recorded for a precedent, time-honoured rule of law
And many an error by the same example
Will rush into the state: it cannot be.
Shy. A Daniel come to judgement! yea, a Daniel!
O wise young judge, how I do honour thee!
Por. I pray you, let me look upon the bond.
Shy. Here 'tis, most reverend doctor, here it it.
Por. Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd thee.
Shy. An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven: sworn before god
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?
No, not for Venice.
Por. Why, this bond is forfeit; time expired the penalty has become due
from
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful:
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.
Shy. When it is paid according to the tenour. agreement — the terms of the bond written
It doth appear you are a worthy judge;
interpretation
You know the law, your exposition of law
Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
pronounce
Proceed to judgement: by my soul I swear
There is no power in the tongue of man
insist
To alter me: I stay here on my bond.
Ant. Most heartily I do beseech the court
To give the judgement.
Por. Why then, thus it is:
You must prepare your bosom for his knife.
Shy. O noble judge! O excellent young man!
Por. For the intent and purpose of the law
intention meaning

Hath full relation to the penalty,
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.
Shy. 'Tis very true: O wise and upright judge!
How much more elder art thou than thy looks!
Por. Therefore lay bare your bosom.
Shy. Ay, his breast:
So says the bond: doth it not, noble judge?
'Nearest his heart:' those are the very words.
Por. It is so. Are there balance here to weigh
The flesh?
Shy. I have them ready.
near at hand
Por. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge, at your cost
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.
Shy. Is it so nominated in the bond? named
Por. It is not so express'd: but what of that?
'Twere good you do so much for charity.
Shy. I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.
Por. You, merchant, have you anything to say?
Ant. But little: I am arm'd and well prepared. fortified armed with
Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well! fortitude
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you; patience
For herein Fortune shows herself more kind seems more kind
Than is her custom: it is still her use custom or constant
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth, survive practice
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow [illegible]
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance agony
Of such a misery doth she cut me off. [illegible]
Commend me to your honourable wife:
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;
Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death; when I am dead
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge
Whether Bassanio had not once a love. [illegible]
Repent not you that you shall lose your friend,

And he repents not that he pays your debt ;
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I'll pay it presently with all my heart. quite willingly
Bass. Antonio, I am married to a wife
Who Which is as dear to me as life itself ;
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life :
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you. from the malignant power of the devil
Por. Your wife would give you little thanks for that,
If she were by, to hear you make the offer. to sacrifice her for a friend
Gra. I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love :
I would she were in heaven, if so she could
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew. cruel
personally pray
Ner. 'Tis well you wise offer it behind her back ; in the absence
The wish would make else an unquiet house.
Shy. [*Aside*] These be the Christian husbands. I
But have a daughter—
Would any of the descendant stock of Barrabas a notorious robber
Had been her husband rather than a Christian !
[*Aloud*] We trifle time : I pray thee, pursue sentence. declare
Por. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine :
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.
Shy. Most rightful judge !
Por. And you must cut this flesh from off his breast :
The law allows it, and the court awards it.
Shy. Most learned judge ! A sentence ! Come, prepare !
Por. Tarry a little ; there is something else.
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood ;
The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh :'
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh ;
But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods

Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate forfeit
Unto the state of Venice.
Gra. O upright judge! Mark, Jew: O learned judge!
Shy. Is that the law?
Por. Thyself shalt see the act: statute law
For, as thou urgest justice, be assured
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.
Gra. O learned judge! Mark, Jew: a learned judge!
Shy. I take this offer, then; pay the bond thrice
And let the Christian go.
Bass. Here is the money.
Por. Soft!
The Jew shall have all justice; soft! no haste:
He shall have nothing but the penalty.
Gra. O Jew! an upright judge, a learned judge!
Por. Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.
Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less nor more
exact - But just a pound of flesh: if thou cut'st more
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance weight -
Or the division of the twentieth part a grain.
Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair, weight -
Thou diest and all thy goods are confiscate.
Gra. A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!
Now, infidel, I have you on the hip.
Por. Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeiture.
Shy. Give me my principal, and let me go.
Bass. I have it ready for thee; here it is.
Por. He hath refused it in the open court:
He shall have merely justice and his bond.
Gra. A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

only
Shy. Shall I not have barely my principal?
Por. Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.
Shy. Why, then the devil give him good of it!
I'll stay no longer question. talk
Por. Tarry, Jew:
The law hath yet another hold on you.
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be proved against an alien
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive plot
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state; private treasury
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st; [illegible] situation
For it appears, by manifest proceeding, evident conduct
That indirectly and directly too clearly; undoubtedly
Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurr'd
already
The danger formerly by me rehearsed. described, recited
Down therefore and beg mercy of the duke. on your knees
Gra. Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself:
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,
little
Thou hast not left the value of a cord;
Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's charge. Cost
Duke. That thou shalt see the difference of our spirit, between Christian & Jew
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it:
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;
The other half comes to the general state,
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine. Commute for
Por. Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.

Shy. Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:
You take my house when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house: you take my life
When you do take the means whereby I live.

Por. What mercy can you render him, Antonio? show to
Gra. A halter gratis; nothing else, for God's sake.
Ant. So please my lord the duke and all the court
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,
I am content; so he will let me have
The other half in use, to render it,
Upon his death, unto the gentleman Lorenzo
That lately stole his daughter:
Two things provided more, that, for this favour,
He presently become a Christian;
The other, that he do record a gift, deed of gift document
Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

Duke. He shall do this, or else I do recant withdraw from
The pardon that I late pronounced here.

Por. Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou say?

Shy. I am content.

Por. Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

Shy. I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;
I am not well: send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.

Duke. Get thee gone, but do it.

Gra. In christening shalt thou have two godfathers:
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more, [illegible]
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font. [*Exit Shylock.*
Christen

Duke. Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.

Por. I humbly do desire your grace of pardon:
I must away this night toward Padua,
And it is meet I presently set forth.

Duke. I am sorry that your leisure serves you not. is what you command
reward Antonio, gratify this gentleman,
For, in my mind, you are much bound to him, obliged You can [illegible] time to stay
[*Exeunt Duke and his train.*

Bass. Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend
Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted
Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof, return for the services
Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew, [illegible]
pay We freely cope your courteous pains withal.
reward *Ant.* And stand indebted, over and above,
In love and service to you evermore.

Por. He is well paid that is well satisfied;
And I, delivering you, am satisfied
And therein do account myself well paid: [illegible] regard
My mind was never yet more mercenary.
I pray you, know me when we meet again: recognise
I wish you well, and so I take my leave.

Bass. Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further: by kind request to take som
souvenir Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute, memento from [illegible]
impose Not as a fee: grant me two things, I pray you,
Not to deny me, and to pardon me. for being importunate

Por. You press me far, and therefore I will yield.
[*To Ant.*] Give me your gloves, I'll wear them for your sake;
[*To Bass.*] And, for your love, I'll take this ring from you:
Do not draw back your hand; I'll take no more;
And you in love shall not deny me this.

Bass. This ring, good sir, alas, it is a trifle!
disgrace I will not shame myself to give you this.

Por. I will have nothing else but only this;
And now methinks I have a mind to it. fancy for

Bass. There's more depends on this than on the value.
The dearest ring in Venice will I give you,
And find it out by proclamation:

Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.
Por. I see, sir, you are liberal in offers : promises but beggar in fulfilling them
You taught me first to beg ; and now methinks
You teach me how a beggar should be answer'd. refused
Bass. Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife ;
And when she put it on, she made me vow
That I should neither sell nor give nor lose it.
Por. That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.
An if your wife be not a mad-woman,
And know how well I have deserved the ring,
She would not hold out enemy for ever, continue to be your enemy
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you !
[*Exeunt Portia and Nerissa.*
Ant. My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring :
Let his deservings and my love withal
Be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment. injunctions
ughed
Bass. Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him ;
Give him the ring, and bring him, if thou canst,
Unto Antonio's house : away ! make haste. [*Exit Gratiano.*
Come, you and I will go thither presently ;
And in the morning early will we both
Fly toward Belmont : come, Antonio. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The same. A street.*

Enter PORTIA *and* NERISSA.

Por. Inquire the Jew's house out, give him this deed
And let him sign it : we'll away to-night
And be a day before our husbands home :
This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

Enter GRATIANO.

Gra. Fair sir, you are well o'erta'en :
My Lord Bassanio upon more advice reflection, on
mature deliberation

Hath sent you here this ring, and doth entreat
Your company at dinner.
Por. That cannot be :
His ring I do accept most thankfully :
And so, I pray you, tell him : furthermore,
I pray you, show my youth old Shylock's house.
Gra. That will I do.
Ner. Sir, I would speak with you.
[*Aside to Por.*] I 'll see if I can get my husband's ring,
Which I did make him swear to keep for ever.
Por. [*Aside to Ner.*] Thou mayst, I warrant. We shall have
good deal of old swearing
That they did give the rings away to men ;
But we 'll outface them, and outswear them too.
[*Aloud*] Away ! make haste : thou know'st where I will tarry.
Ner. Come, good sir, will you shew me to this house ?
[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Belmont. Avenue to* PORTIA'S *house.*

Enter LORENZO *and* JESSICA.

moonlit
Lor. The moon shines bright : in such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees
And they did make no noise, in such a night
Troilus methinks mounted the Troyan walls Trojan
And sigh'd his soul toward the Grecian tents,
Where Cressid lay that night.
Jes. In such a night
walkover
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew [illegible]
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself
And ran dismay'd away.

Lor. In such a night
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand love
Upon the wild sea banks and waft her love made a sign to welcome the lover Aeneas
To come again to Carthage.

queen
Carthage

Jes. In such a night
Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Æson. restore youth

Lor. In such a night
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew come stealthily away
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice
As far as Belmont.

odigal
or
impecunious
love

Jes. In such a night
Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well,
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith
And ne'er a true one.

Lor. In such a night
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

peak ill
her love
lly him
aithless

Jes. I would out-night you, did no body come;
But, hark, I hear the footing of a man. foot-fall, steps

Enter STEPHANO.

Lor. Who comes so fast in silence of the night?

Steph. A friend.

Lor. A friend! what friend? your name, I pray you, friend?

Steph. Stephano is my name; and I bring word
My mistress will before the break of day
Be here at Belmont: she doth stray about
By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays
For happy wedlock hours.

Lor. Who comes with her?

Steph. None but a holy hermit and her maid.
I pray you, is my master yet return'd?
Bassanio

Lor. He is not, nor we have not heard from him.
But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,
And ceremoniously let us prepare in a fit way
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

Enter LAUNCELOT.

Laun. Sola, sola! wo ha, ho! sola, sola!

Lor. Who calls?

Laun. Sola! did you see Master Lorenzo? Master Lorenzo, sola, sola!

Lor. Leave hollaing, man: here.

Laun. Sola! where? where?

Lor. Here.

messenger with post

Laun. Tell him there's a post come from my master, with his horn full of good news: my master will be here ere morning. [*Exit.*

wait for

Lor. Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming.
And yet no matter: why should we go in?
My friend Stephano, signify, I pray you, tell them
Within the house, your mistress is at hand;
musician
And bring your music forth into the air. [*Exit Stephano.*
How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank! elevated
Here will we sit and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night steal into our through our
strains
are fit for Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven face of the sky
covered
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold: bright stars
star
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
its
that does not But in his motion like an angel sings,
singing in harmony with
always Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay subject to deca
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it. harmony

Enter Musicians.

Come, ho ! and wake Diana with a hymn : awake the selena of the sweet moonlit night with a song
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear, charms Portia
And draw her home with music. attract [*Music.*
Jes. I am never merry when I hear sweet music.
Lor. The reason is, your spirits are attentive :
For do but note a wild and wanton herd, of cattle
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts, wild
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud, jumping wildly
Which is the hot condition of their blood ;
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,
Or any air of music touch their ears, strain
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand, sudden stand altogether
Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze
By the sweet power of music : therefore the poet
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones and floods rivers & others feigning
Since nought so stockish, hard and full of rage, stupid callous
But music for the time doth change his nature. its
The man that hath no music in himself, his soul
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds, harmony
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils ; thefts
The motions of his spirit are dull as night movements
And his affections dark as Erebus : Hell feelings
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

Enter PORTIA *and* NERISSA.

Por. That light we see is burning in my hall.
How far that little candle throws his beams ! its
So shines a good deed in a naughty world. wicked
Ner. When the moon shone, we did not see the candle.
Por. So doth the greater glory dim the less : the moon dims the candle, the greater light always dims the less
A substitute shines brightly as a king
Until a king be by, and then his state

Empties itself, as doth an inland brook
sea
Into the main of waters. Music ! hark !
Ner. It is your music, madam, of the house. the music of the musicians of your house
absolutely
Por. Nothing is good, I see, without respect :
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day. music [of] the silence of the night
Ner. Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.
Por. The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark
When neither is attended, and I think the mind is preoccupied
The nightingale, if she should sing by day, with other matters and
When every goose is cackling, would be thought no attention to the song
No better a musician than the wren.
circumstances
How many things by season season'd are made suitable flavour
To their right praise and true perfection !
Peace, ho ! the moon sleeps with Endymion
And would not be awaked. [*Music ceases.*
Lor. That is the voice,
Or I am much deceived, of Portia.
Por. He knows me as the blind man knows the cuckoo,
By the bad voice.
Lor. Dear lady, welcome home.
Por. We have been praying for our husbands' healths,
Which speed, we hope, the better for our words. prayers
Are they returned ?
Lor. Madam, they are not yet :
But there is come a messenger before,
To signify their coming. herald
Por. Go in, Nerissa ;
Give order to my servants that they take
No note at all of our being absent hence :
Nor you, Lorenzo : Jessica, nor you. [*A tucket sounds.*
Lor. Your husband is at hand ; I hear his trumpet :
gossips
We are no tell-tales, madam ; fear you not.
Por. This night methinks is but the daylight sick :

It looks a little paler ; 'tis a day
Such as the day is when the sun is hid. under the clouds

Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, GRATIANO, *and their followers.*

Bass. We should hold day with the Antipodes,
If you would walk in absence of the sun.
Por. Let me give light, but let me not be light ; frivolous
For a light wife doth make a heavy husband, annoying
And never be Bassanio so for me :
But God sort all ! You are welcome home, my lord.
Bass. I thank you, madam. Give welcome to my friend.
This is the man, this is Antonio,
To whom I am so infinitely bound. obliged
Por. You should in all sense be much bound to him,
For, as I hear, he was much bound for you. bound in chain
Ant. No more than I am well acquitted of. under heavy obli
taken security
Por. Sir, you are very welcome to our house :
It must appear in other ways than words,
Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy. words of welcome
cut short
Gra. [*To Ner.*] By yonder moon I swear you do me wrong ;
In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk :
Would he were dead that had it, for my part, for my sake
Since you do take it, love, so much at heart. [illegible]
Por. A quarrel, ho, already ! what's the matter ?
Gra. About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring circle
That she did give me, whose posy was motto
For all the world like cutler's poetry cutting
Upon a knife, 'Love me, and leave me not.'
Ner. What talk you of the posy or the value ? poetry
You swore to me, when I did give it you,
That you would wear it till your hour of death
And that it should lie with you in your grave :
Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,

ring

mindful, careful
You should have been respective and have kept it. considering
Gave it a judge's clerk! no, God's my judge, Well I know
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on's face that had it. have a beard
Gra. He will, an if he live to be a man. reach up to manhood
Ner. Ay, if a woman live to be a man.
Gra. Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth,
servile, small
A kind of boy, a little scrubbed boy, shabby, mean looking
No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk,
alkative A prating boy, that begg'd it as a fee:
I could not for my heart deny it him.
Por. You were to blame, I must be plain with you, explicit
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift;
ilon A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger
fastened to
And so riveted with faith unto your flesh.
Bassanio
I gave my love a ring and made him swear
Never to part with it; and here he stands;
I dare be sworn for him he would not leave it
Nor pluck it from his finger, for the wealth
contains
That the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano,
You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief:
If An 'twere to me, I should be mad at it.
Bass. [*Aside*] Why, I were best to cut my left hand off
And swear I lost the ring defending it.
Gra. My Lord Bassanio gave his ring away
Unto the judge that begg'd it and indeed
Deserved it too; and then the boy, his clerk,
That took some pains in writing, he begg'd mine;
And neither man nor master would take aught
But the two rings.
Por. What ring gave you, my lord?
Not that, I hope, which you received of me.
Bass. If I could add a lie unto a fault,
I would deny it; but you see my finger

Hath not the ring upon it; it is gone.
Por. Even so void is your false heart of truth.
By heaven, I will never come in your bed
Until I see the ring.
Ner. No, nor I yours
Till I again see mine.
Bass. Sweet Portia,
If you did know to whom I gave the ring,
If you did know for whom I gave the ring,
And would conceive for what I gave the ring,
And how unwillingly I left the ring,
When nought would be accepted but the ring,
mitigate
You would abate the strength of your displeasure.
Por. If you had known the virtue of the ring, power
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
my Or your own honour to contain the ring, retain
You would not then have parted with the ring.
is man What man is there so much unreasonable,
If you had pleased to have defended it
who would have
With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty
portunately To urge the thing held as a ceremony? sacred memento
[illegible] Nerissa teaches me what to believe:
I'll die for't but some woman had the ring.
Bass. No, by my honour, madam, by my soul,
No woman had it, but a civil doctor,
Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me
And begg'd the ring; the which I did deny him
llowed And suffer'd him to go displeased away;
Even he that did uphold the very life save
Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet lady?
bliged I was enforced to send it after him;
I was beset with shame and courtesy;
My honour would not let ingratitude

soil
So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady;
For, by these blessed candles of the night, stars
Had you been there, I think you would have begg'd
The ring of me to give the worthy doctor.
Por. Let not that doctor e'er come near my house:
Since he hath got the jewel that I loved,
And that which you did swear to keep for me,
I will become as liberal as you:
I'll not deny him any thing I have.
Ner. Nor I his clerk; therefore be well advised
How you do leave me to mine own protection. myself — always sta — by me
Gra. Well, do you so: let not me take him then; catch
damage ; injure
For if I do, I'll mar the young clerk's pen.
Ant. I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels.
Por. Sir, grieve not you; you are welcome notwithstanding.
Bass. Portia, forgive me this enforced wrong: against my will
And, in the hearing of these many friends,
I swear to thee, even by thine own fair eyes,
Wherein I see myself—
Por. Mark you but that!
In both my eyes he doubly sees himself;
In each eye, one: swear by your double self, which is full of double-dealing
And there's an oath of credit.
Bass. Nay, but hear me; & duplicity
Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear
I never more will break an oath with thee.
Ant. I once did lend my body for his wealth; welfare, weal benefit
Which, but for him that had your husband's ring,
Had quite miscarried: I dare be bound again, guarantee
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord
Will never more break faith advisedly.
Por. Then you shall be his surety. Give him this
And bid him keep it better than the other.

Ant. Here, Lord Bassanio; swear to keep this ring.
Bass. By heaven, it is the same I gave the doctor!
Por. I had it of him: pardon me, Bassanio.
Gra. Why, this is like the mending of highways
In summer, where the ways are fair enough.
Por. You are all amazed:
Here is a letter; read it at your leisure;
It comes from Padua, from Bellario:
There you shall find that Portia was the doctor,
Nerissa there her clerk: Lorenzo here
Shall witness I set forth as soon as you
And even but now return'd; I have not yet
Enter'd my house. Antonio, you are welcome;
And I have better news in store for you
Than you expect: unseal this letter soon;
There you shall find three of your argosies
Are richly come to harbour suddenly:
You shall not know by what strange accident
I chanced on this letter. chanced to get
Ant. I am dumb.
Bass. Were you the doctor and I knew you not?
Gra. Were you the clerk and yet I knew you not!
Ant. Sweet lady, you have given me life and living;
For here I read for certain that my ships
Are safely come to road. harbour
Por. How now, Lorenzo!
My clerk hath some good comforts too for you.
Ner. Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee.
There do I give to you and Jessica,
From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,
After his death, of all he dies possess'd of.
Lor. Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way
Of starved people.

Por. It is almost morning,
And yet I am sure you are not satisfied
Of these events at full. Let us go in ;
And charge us there upon inter' gatories, questions
And we will answer all things faithfully.
Gra. Well, while I live I'll fear no other thing
So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring. [*Exeunt.*

NOTES.

ACT I.

The first Act, as usually in Shakespeare, is an act of preparation. We are introduced to all the chief personages that make up the drama. There is a true and profound friendship between Antonio, the royal merchant, and Bassanio, an impecunious adventurer. Bassanio has lost all his ventures and now asks money for one more by which he hopes to retrieve his lost fortune. He would go and try for the hand of Portia, a rich heiress at Belmont Now, this Portia has no choice in the matter of getting a husband— it all depends on the lottery of three caskets. Antonio has no ready cash to furnish forth Bassanio, and offers to borrow of Shylock the Jew. Of the three episodes, of the caskets, the bond, and the rings, two are distinctly suggested at the very outset and the third would follow as a corollary.

Scene 1.

Shakespeare's tragedies and comedies are made of the same staple. The first scene of this delightful comedy, is thus a scene of sadness. Antonio is unaccountably sad; Bassanio is sad too. Gratiano, who speaks an infinite deal of nothing, is the only merry spirit but he can hardly remove the shades of gloom hanging over the two chief persons of the drama. At last Bassanio reveals the cause of his sadness, and asks his friend to trust him with a further sum of three thousand ducats that he may play a childish prank with it in the hope of retrieving his lost fortune. Antonio agrees, but because he has no cash he would try credit.

1. Antonio's sadness is so *unusual* with him that he does not know the cause of it, and it is so *great* that it not only wearies him but makes him a 'want-wit' and even incapable of knowing himself.

Various explanations, none very satisfactory, have been offered of the causes of this sadness. One makes it "the presentiment of evil"; another, 'the malady of the rich who have been agitated and tried by nothing'; a third justifies it on the ground that if he were not shown as melancholy and therefore crotchety, he could never have either signed such a bond or been so extravagantly devoted to a friend; and a fourth refers it to the prospect of losing his friend Bassanio who had promised to tell Antonio 'to-day' (line 121) the name of the lady to whom he had sworn a secret pilgrimage. Salarino explains it as the result of his natural anxiety about his ventures on the sea ; or of the workings of love in him. Gratiano is inclined to believe that it is due to his having too much regard for the world and its good opinion of him. After all these, perhaps, the most proper explanation is, as Salarino puts it, that he was sad because he was not merry.

It is noticeable that almost all the principal characters of the play are more or less, and each in his or her own way, sad. Bassanio who had lost everything and was living upon the kindness of a friend, could not have been happy ; Portio, when she meets us for the first time, informs us that her little body was 'aweary' of the great world (the very term in which Antonio expresses his sadness). It is strange how Shakespeare, out of all these jangling, discordant elements, strikes out a note of true mirth and pleasantry in this play. Evidently, therefore, the sadness of Antonio strikes the key-note of the drama. It must be borne in mind that Shakespeare's tragedies and comedies do not come of two but of the same house. Often the merest chance, here a silly bond which had stuff in it to make a tragedy, saves the play from having a gloomy and melancholy end.

In sooth, in truth ; indeed.

2. You say, 'It wearies you'.

3. **caught it,** got. As a man 'catches' a cold or an infection. **came by,** got ; acquired. Evidently the sadness was no part of his character.

4. What the *character* of it, is, and what the *cause* ; its nature and its origin.

stuff, material.

5. I am *yet* to learn. I yet do not know.

6. **want-wit,** dullard ; simpleton, one wanting in wit or intelligence.

a silly or foolish person

7. **much ado,** great difficulty. **know,** recognise.

8. Your mind is very anxious about your ships tossing on the sea. Antonio was a royal merchant of Venice, and might naturally be concerned about his ventures abroad.

9-14. Your mind is on the ocean where your large—rich as royal merchants or the magnificently-decked toy-ships carried about in land processions—trading vessels, flying by with their sails swollen with the wind, tower above the smaller vessels, and make them rock on the waves in their track as they sweep by, even as rich and wealthy citizens peer over the poorer ones on the streets and they bow with reverence and do curtesy to them.

9. **argosies,** large merchant-ships, as distinguished from the *petty traffickers*, the small vessels engaged in the coasting-trade. *Argosy* ; the word is the same as *Ragusa*, and derived from the port of *Ragusa* on the Adriatic. **portly,** grand, large, swollen with the wind.

10. The comparison was suggested by the portly demeanour of rich merchants like Antonio going through Venetian streets.

signiors, the same as the English 'Sirs'.

rich burghers, wealthy citizens.

on the flood. There may either be a comma before *on*, making it go with 'argosies' and not 'burghers', or *on* should be *of.* Some think that the alteration is not necessary, as the sense is plain.

11. A comparison of the argosies in their wealth and magnificence with those enormous machines, in the shape of castles, dragons, ships, giants, etc. that were drawn about the streets in the ancient shows or peagants. *Pageants of the sea* would thus mean magnificently-decked toyships carried about in procession on festive occasions—a not uncommon thing in Shakespeare's time.

12. **overpeer**, look out above; tower above. [illegible]

13. **curtesy** : "suggested by the rocking, ducking motion in the petty traffickers caused by the wake of the argosy as it sails past them. The small vessels toss on the sea in the track of a large one—this is represented as a beautiful image of their bowing low in reverence, as poorer citizens do before rich burghers. [illegible]

14. **woven wings**, sails.

Mr. Percivale thinks that it is the small vessels that 'fly' past the larger ones, and pitch and toss by their own motion : but how could they then curtesy and do reverence? Do inferior persons show any respect to the superior by swiftly passing by them?

15. **such**, so valuable. **venture**, cargo; merchandise. **forth**, out at sea. Comp. 'I am bid *forth* to supper' (ii. 5. 11).

16-7. **affections**, feelings. **hopes**, 'ventures'. **abroad**, at sea, following the fortunes of my ventures.

still, constantly, always.

18. I would hold up the grass in the wind to see from which point blows it. His fortunes at sea would depend on the courses of the wind; hence his anxiety about it.

where sits, in or from which direction blows. *sits* indicates the 'steady' blowing of the wind.

19. I would be always looking into maps to know the position of ports, piers, and roadsteads where my ships might conveniently seek refuge from storms at sea.

in, into.

roads, roadsteads; places where the ships may 'ride' at anchor.

21. **out of doubt**, undoubtedly. Must be taken with 'would make.'

22. **sad.** He suggests that this—anxiety about his ventures at sea—might be the cause of Antonio's sadness too.

22. Salarino goes further than Salanio, and says that his breath cooling his broth, the mere sight of the sand in the hour-glass, or a church, would fill him with dread as to what disasters may befall a ship at sea, and that would make him sad.

22-4. As at dinner I blew upon the hot broth to make it cool, I would think of the blowing of a stormy wind at sea and the disastrous results thereof, and tremble with fear (even as does a man who has the ague). My anxiety about my ventures would make me exaggerate my breath into a storm and my broth into a sea.

wind, breath. **broth,** soup.

too great, stormy.

25-9. The sand in the hour-glass would suggest to my anxious mind the shallows and flats in the sea, and my frightened imagination would make me behold my rich ship wrecked on the sandy shore, her high top-mast lower than her sides, and lying on the sand as though in its grave.

the sandy hour-glass, *i.e.* the sand in the hour-glass. Hour-glasses fixed on iron stands were frequently to be seen in churches in Shakespeare's time.

27. **my wealthy Andrew:** the name of Salarino's one ship. **wealthy,** richly-laden; carrying a rich cargo.

docked, placed in sand as in a dock (for repairs—with an irony); embedded; lying.

28. **vailing,** lowering; letting fall. **high top,** *i.e.* the top-mast.

29. **burial,** burial-place; grave in the sand.

29-32. He could not see the church building without thinking of a rock in the sea on which his vessel might dash and break in pieces.

30. The huge stone structure.

31. **straight,** immediately.

32. **touching but,** only touching; a mere touch with which would be enough to shatter the sides of his gentle Andrew, his one vessel.

33. **her spices,** *i.e.* her cargo of spices. The spices were carried over from Felix Arabia. The Venetians had the carrying trade in those days, and Venice was the emporium of all goods from the east.

34. Scatter the bales of silk on the water and as though clothe the sea with silk. Evidently Salarino traded in spices and silks (from China).

35-6. Only a moment ago enormously rich and now by the loss of the vessel, absolutely poor.

but, only. **even now** before the wreck. **this**, said with some gesture signifying large wealth.

And now, after the wreck.

36-8. Can I think of this and not think too that such a thing happening would indeed make me sad.

thought, thinking faculty ; power of thinking.

bechanced, happening.

39. **tell not me** that you have any cause other than your anxiety about your merchandise ; I cannot and will not believe it.

I know is emphatic.

40. **to think**, *i.e.* thinking.

41. **it**, namely, that I have not one but many ships, so that the loss of one cannot much affect me.

42. All my merchandise are not trusted to one ship only.

ventures, merchandise ; cargo. **bottom**, ship.

43-4. I do not depend for all my wealth on the successful ventures of this year. I have already put by a large fortune. But if this be true, how failed he in paying Shylock ? The fact is, this is a mere shift to put off the two summer friends. Antonio reveals the real state of his fortune to Bassanio in l. 177.

50. **two-headed Janus** : Janus, the Roman deity of gates and doors, was generally represented with two heads. The oath by him is appropiate because Salarino speaks of two classes of men, men with laughing and men with sad countenances.

51. Ever since she has been making men, Nature has made strange fellows—some that will always laugh, and some that will always be sour.

52-3. Some with half-shut eyes will always be laughing even at a bagpiper as foolishly and absurdly as a parrot laughs mechanically and without proper cause.

peep, "as in laughing, when the eyes are half-shut" (*Warburgton*).

parrots that are taught to laugh and laugh without rhyme or reason. Read a comma after 'parrots.'

common sense or
rational conduct

a bag-piper, a musician playing on a bag-pipe.

54-6. **There** are others who will never laugh at all, no, not even smile, but always maintain a sour look, even though the gravest of human beings should admit that the jest is merry enough to excite laughter.

e.g.

act without rhyme or reason, act recklessly
without due thought & consideration.

54. **other** : singular used as plural. Abbott gives many instances. **vinegar aspect,** sour countenance ; morose appearance.

56. **Nestor,** the oldest of the Greek heroes who had been to Troy, and therefore presumably the gravest of them. Here used as the type of a very grave and serious man who does not ordinarily laugh.

57. **comes** : frequently in Shakespeare the verb agrees with the first of many nouns linked by 'and'.

59. **better,** more enjoyable.

60. **made you merry,** caused you to shake off your sadness.

61. **prevented,** anticipated ; stood in my way.

62. **worth** : why say these are *worthier* friends, you are no less valuable to me.

regard, estimation.

63. **calls on,** requires you to go.

64. **embrace the occasion,** take the opportunity.

66. **when shall we laugh,** when shall we have the joy of your company ! When shall we make merry together ?

67. **grow** etc, because you do not let us see you as often as we used to do ; we grow stranger to us by keeping yourself off from us.

must it be so, may mean either, 'is it proper that you should grow so strange ?' or, 'Must you go away ? can you not stay ?'

68. We will make time to see you when you are more at leisure. He means that Bassanio's time will now be wholly given to conversation with Antonio.

70. **two** : Gratiano and Lorenzo.

71. **have in mind,** remember. Perhaps Lorenzo had already arranged to elope with Jessica, and Bassanio had promised to help him.

74. This is Gratiano's explanation of Antonio's 'sadness,' and a very characteristic one. Gratiano had little 'care' of the world to vex him. He thinks Antonio was sad because he was too much concerned or anxious about his fortunes and position. He was more concerned than proper about earthly matters.

75. You lose the power of enjoying the world because you are so over-anxious about it. The benefit of earthly position and fortune is nought to him who is too much troubled with anxiety about them.

76. **changed** : suggests that Antonio was not naturally morose. That is why he himself did not know the cause of his sadness.

77. I pay no more regard to earthly considerations than they deserve. I value the world at what it is worth, and nothing more.

78-9. I look upon the world as a place where every man has a part to play, and I a tragic or serious part.

sad : grave, serious ; and in the light of what follows, tragic. Life is a stage on which Antonio plays a serious or tragic part, and Gratiano undertakes to play a light, comic one, the part of a fool.

The comparison of life with a stage, was a favourite one with Shakespeare. Comp. *As You Like It*, "All the world's a stage" ; and *Macbeth*, "Life's a stage".

the fool, the part of a Fool or Clown. Let my life be a life of joy and merriment, and not, like Antonio's, full of unreasonable gloom.

80. Let old age deforming me physically still find me hale and hearty in mind, full of mirth and laughter. *or*, let the wrinkles of old age be those caused by laughter and not by care. I prefer the first meaning.

81-2. I would much rather heat my liver with wine than cool my heart with sighs that shorten life. I would drown the cares of life in wine and jollity rather than let them damp me and hasten me to death.

mortifying, killing ; fatal. A relic of the physiology that every sigh tended to shorten life. Comp. *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 97 and 8 : "Pale of cheer, With sighs of love that costs the fresh blood dear" ; also *Rom. and Jul.* iii. 5, "Dry sorrow drinks our blood".

84. Look as dull motionless as the stone statue of his grandfather. Why should a living man with living blood in him be as cold as a stone statue or an effigy on a tomb? an image or likeness of a person or thing in sculptu painting or otherwi

cut, *i.e.*, his effigy cut or curved. **alabaster**, a kind of stone formerly used for monuments and statues.

careless, relaxed

85-6. Why should a man be so listless as to appear as though sleeping when he ought to be awake, and thus cultivating a peevish temperament get a diseased body by having a diseased mind.

creep into, gradually get. **jaundice**, a disease due to a deranged liver. The Elizabethans believed that it was also caused by 'peevishness'. Modern pathology is inclined to believe that 'peevishness' is the result and not the cause of jaundice.

what, this ; take it from me. A colloquialism.

87. **love** that prompts me to speak.

88-94. There are some men whose faces always maintain a fixed, stolid, changeless appearance, like the surface of a cesspool, who keep obstinately silent with a view to be regarded by their fellowmen as wise, grave, profoundly thoughtful. Such men act like one who in his presumptuous folly wants others to believe that his utterances are infallible and that when he delivers them all should be silent.

89. **cream and mantle,** are overcast with sadness like cream rising to the surface of milk or scum on that of a body of standing, motionless water.

90. Who maintain an obstinate silence.

91. **dressed in an opinion,** to be credited with the reputation: to be regarded as. **opinion,** reputation.

92. **conceit,** thought. Comp. *Haml.*, "*conceit* in weakest bodies strongest works". It is another form of 'to conceive'.

93. **As who,** like one who.

Sir Oracle, infallible in my utterances; I deserve to be listened to and obeyed as reverently as an oracle among the Greeks. The Folio reads, 'I am sir an Oracle'. But there is a pomposity in the reading in the text suitable to the character Gratiano is fancying.

94. **ope,** open. **let** etc.; let none dare disturb me; let all listen in profound silence. A proverb.

95-99. I know men who are regarded as wise because they speak nothing; whereas should they open their lips, their stupid utterances would make their fellowmen call them 'fools' and thus make them liable to that condemnation which the Bible denounces on those who call others 'fool'. The reference is to two passages in the Bible: (1) to *Prov.* xvii. 28, "Even a fool when he holdeth his peace is counted wise; and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding"; and (2) to *Matt.* v. 22, "Whosoever shall say to his brother "thou fool", shall be in danger of hell-fire".

96. are reputed wise only because they say nothing.

98-9. **damn those ears,** bring the sentence of condemnation on those whose ears hearing their foolish prattle, would make them call them 'fools'. For the allusion, see above.

101-2. Do not with a pretended appearance of gravity seek to get the good opinion of the world which may be easily got but is after all worth nothing.

this melancholy bait, *i.e.*, the bait of melancholy or gravity.

this fool gudgeon, the foolish little fish that may be easily caught. Similarly, reputation is easily obtained but really worth little. It is possible to explain also as, 'this gudgeon, this trifling reputation, of the fool, *i.e.*, obtained among the foolish part of men.'

103. **a while,** for a time.

104. **exhortation,** oration; harangue. After dinner I will continue and bring to an end my discourse about gravity and earthly reputation.

106. **these same** as Gratiano has spoken about. I am perforce compelled to maintain the character of a dumb wise man for Gratiano's loquacity will not let me speak.

107. **moe,** more. In old English 'mo' or 'moe' was used in reference to number ; and 'more' to size.

110. I will just take to talking to bid you farewell. [illegible]

for this gear, on this occasion ; for this time. Steevens calls it 'a colloquial expression perhaps of no very determinate import'.

111-2. Thanks that you have at last followed my exhortation and taken to talking. Let the dried tongue of an ox be silent, not a man.

commendable, praiseworthy.

neat, ox. So "neat's leather" in J. C. I. 1 ; *Winter's Tale* I. 2, "the steer, the heifer, and the calf, are all called neat".

113. Does what he has just said amount to anything ? Does it mean anything ?

Johnson reads, 'Is that anything *new?*' But 'new' destroys the antithesis between 'anything' and 'nothing' (in Bassanio's speech).

114. **an infinite deal of nothing,** a good deal of nonsense.

mean, vile
worthless

115ff. His arguments are never very apparent and always very paltry—most of his talk is mere verbiage. [illegible]

120. **pilgrimage,** visit ; journey.

123. **disabled mine estate,** ruined my fortune ; impoverished myself.

124-5. By living above my means. By pursuing more ostentatious living than my small income would justify. [illegible]

something, to some extent, somewhat ; **swelling port,** splendid style of living ; "external pomp of appearance" (Steevens). [illegible]

faint means, small resources ; small income. [illegible]

continuance of.

126-7. **do I make moan,** am I sorry. **abridged,** cut down ; to be forced to give up much of that splendour of living.

rate, style of living. **care,** anxiety.

128. **to come fairly off,** to pay up ; to clear up honourably or in full.

129. **my time** etc., my rather extravagant style of living.

time, Schmidt explains as 'life' ; Allen as 'youth or manhood'.

130. **gaged,** "pledged" (Halliwell) ; involved.

131. **owe the most,** am most largely in debt, as having got from thee (1) money and (2) love, and both most lavishly.

132-4. Your love for me permits me to tell you the way I have hit upon to pay off all my debts.

a warranty, authorisation. It gives me the right to trust my ideas to you.

unburden, tell you of.

135. **it**, your 'plots and purposes'. The singular may be justified by the sense, not by the position. 'Let me know how you propose to pay off'.

136-7. If your scheme be an honourable one, as you yourself have always been a man of honour.

still, always; inspite of his having lived extravagantly and being in debt, Bassanio had an honourable intention to pay it up in full. This is only an assurance on the part of Antonio that Bassanio had not lost his regard though his "time" had been "something too prodigal".

stand within the eye of, within the range of honour's vision; which honour may look on without turning away from, *i.e.*, if it be consistent with honour.

138. **my person**, as Antonio pledges his person in the present case.

my extrement means, all my resources made the most of or stretched to the utmost. He was thinking of his 'credit' as distinguished from his 'purse', the money in hand.

139. **all unlocked**, very ready. to help you in your difficulty.

occasions, needs; requirements.

140-3. Losing one arrow and sending another of the same power of flight in the same direction, and seeking for the latter, it often happens that we find both. Bassanio did this in archery in his schoolboy days; he would follow the same principle now in the matter of borrowing. He has lost many sums, he would venture one more in the hope that he may recover all. With this fallacious argument—the spendthrift's favourite one in borrowing—Bassanio applies to Antonio to give him one more loan. The spendthrift does not care to think that there is just a chance of the new hazard being as much lost as the former ones.

141. **his fellow**, his equal; another arrow of the same kind and the same power of flight.. **flight**, capable of going the same distance; so "feathered and weighted."

142. **advised watch**, deliberate care.

143. **To find forth**, *i.e.*, out. Craik says this is "neither English nor sense." But it occurs in Shakespeare elsewhere too, and seems to have been common in his time.

adventuring, risking; hazarding.

144-5. I cite this childhood experience from no wicked or crafty but innocent motives. I cite this not to cheat you out of more money but just to signify how I propose to pay off my debts.

urge, press on your attention; cite.

[illegible]

what follows, what I am going to say; the loan that I am going to ask of you.

pure, innocence; either (1) from pure and innocent motives, or (2) from pure foolishness. In the latter case, the meaning would be, I cite this proof from the foolish practices of childhood because what I am going to say, my prayer for a new loan, is itself pure foolishness. Bassanio, it may be supposed, says so in his embarrassment.

146-7. 'I owe you much and that which I owe you, I have, like a wilful youth, lost'. The sentence bears no strict grammatical construction.

wilful, reckless; prodigal; obstinately extravagant.

147-9. *i.e.* if you just choose to send more good money after the bad, please to help me with a new loan. Bassanio is asking his friend to carry out the "childhood proof" he has cited.

self, self-same; very same.

150. **As**, because. Because I will now keep "more advised watch." I will be more prudent this time.

or or, either or. Common in poetry. **find both**, pay up both the debts.

151-2. Repay this second loan I am now taking and remain in debt to you for the first. Like a spendthrift he fails to see a third contingency, that both the debts may be lost.

latter hazard, this present loan.

thankfully, gratefully.

153. **spend but time**, merely waste your time.

154. In thus speaking in a roundabout way and not directly appealing to my love for you.

wind about, i.e. in winding. The expression is suggested by the sportsman's way of beating about the bush in search of game.

circumstance, circumlocution; "great circumstance of words, a going about the bush" (Furness.)

155-7. You more wrong me by doubting whether I would sacrifice my uttermost all in your behalf than if you had wasted all my fortune.

my uttermost, *i.e.* my resources to the uttermost; *or* my willingness to do the utmost for you.

made waste of, wasted.

159. That you think I can do to help you.

160. **prest**, "ready" (Steevens); "bound" (Staunton). This lets us into another secret of Bassanio's character; we have seen that he was a spendthrift and a loving friend, we now find him as a fortune-hunter, one seeking to retrieve his ruined fortunes by marrying

richly. Perhaps there was something about him which redeemed him, and made him an object of affection and regard for such a thorough and shrewd man of the world as Antonio must have been.

161. **richly left**, left a rich heiress by the death of her father.

162. **fairer than that word**, fair. She was fairer in the possession of wondrous virtues than in that of mere external beauty. Her moral worth is greater than her physical charms.

sometimes, the modern 'sometime', formerly.

163. I received love-glances. That Bassanio had been to Belmont and had met Portia, is evident from I. 2. 103. He had heard of her, seen her (a young gallant that he was), thought her in love with him (as the sequel shows she really was), and conceived the idea of retrieving his fortunes by trying for her hand.

164. **nothing undervalued**, in no way inferior. She is not only a namesake but an exact counterpart in character and worth of Cato's daughter Portia, the wife of Brutus, one of the conspirators against Julius Caesar.

a likeness person exactly resembling another [illegible]

166. The reputation of her excellence has spread out over the world, and suitors come from all countries seeking her hand. We shall meet with some of these suitors later on.

169. **sunny locks**, light and lustrous curls.

170. **a golden fleece**, this suggests the classical comparison.

171-2. As Jason of old went to Colchos in search of the golden fleece, so many young gallants come from all the different parts of the world to Belmont in quest of Portia.

Colchos, more property. 'Colchis', a country at the eastern end of the Black sea. **strand**, shores. For another allusion to the Argonautic expedition, see III. 2. 237.

Jasons, young suitors or gallants.

175. **presages** etc., foretells me of such success. Read 'that after 'mind'. **thrift**, thriving.

177. See 142. Antonio is prepared to trust that secret to Bassanio which he could not to the two other summer friends.

178. **commodity**, goods (to sell off and get money).

180. Yet there are some critics who are for maintaining that Antonio enters into the bond because sadness had made a want-wit of him. No, not that but his sincere love for Bassanio and his desire to rack his credit to the uttermost to help him out of his difficulties.

181. **racked**, strained, stretched.

182. **furnish**, fit thee out.

183. **presently**, immediately, at once.

184. **is**, can be found. **no question make**, do not doubt.

185. To get the money either as a substantial merchant (from some money-lender) or out of personal regard for me (from some friend).

Shakespeare frequently uses a rhymed couplet to mark the end of a scene.

Scene 2.

This scene introduces us to the other side of the picture. We have seen Bassanio prepare for Portia, we now see Portia ready to accept him. The "speechless messages" had indeed spoken the truth of her heart—she is in love with Bassanio, and pestered with suitors from all the quarters of the globe. We also learn that her fate depended on the right choice of a casket, a very desperate choice enough to fill her with anxiety.

1-2. The causes of her world-weariness are not difficult to make out. She had seen Bassanio and loved him, and yet he was not among the suitors. She might even lose him if any of these happened to make the right choice. The condition attached to the choice, that if one failed to choose rightly he must forefeit all chances of marrying elsewhere, might frighten Bassanio should Bassanio turn up. All these combined to make her 'sad'. It is the langour of hope deferred.

troth, truth.

little, and "great", are in contrast.

3. **would be,** would have reason to be 'aweary.'

5-6. Men who have more than enough are sometimes as sick as those that have nothing.

surfeit with too much of wealth ; are cloyed with excess of good fortunes.

6-7. **It is...mean,** it is a great happiness to have neither too much nor too little ; to have competency and neither superfluity nor pancity of good fortunes.

mean happiness. The Folio reads 'small', losing the quibble or play upon the meaning of two words sounding alike.

seated, placed.

7-8. The man who surfeits with too much, decays sooner than the man who has just sufficient fortune to enable him to live decently.

superfluity, abs. for con. ; the man who has a superfluous fortune. **comes by,** gets. See I. 1-3. **white hairs,** sign of senile decay. **competency** is also abs. for con. ; the man who is "seated in the mean."

9. These are good maxims (*sentences, sententiae*) and well delivered.

10. They would be delivered to better purpose if they were faithfully followed. But men very often seek superfluity inspite of the white hairs which they get in consequence.

11-3. If we followed in life the right maxims which we all know, irreligion and poverty would vanish from the earth.

chapels, are small churches for private worship. Men would cease to worship privately and assemble with others in the church; that is, they would forget their religious differences and unite in common and universal service to God.

of a dirty white or dusky colours

poor men would soon cease to live in low and dingy cottages and make palaces for themselves; that is, by exercising prudence and foresight and economy, raise themselves from the degradation and misery of poverty.

13-5. He would be a good clergyman who followed in life the precepts he delivered to others; but it is easier to deliver fine maxims than to abide by them in one's own life.

15-8. An old man (who is guided more by the *brain*, reason, than by the *blood*, passion), may lay down rules for the guidance and control of the hot-blooded young but the naturally passionate temperament of the latter will make them violate these laws. Like a mad hare that leaps over the nets laid for it, youth easily overrides the decrees or good counsels of the aged. The sentence represents the struggle in Portia between her love and her duty to her father. It also shows why very often wise maxims are not followed in life.

The brain perhaps does not mean the young man's own brain but that of an aged counsellor. **for**, to restrain or control.

a hot temper, the naturally *hot* or passionate temperament of the young. **cold decree** laid down by 'the brain' or the aged.

such etc., *i. e.* youth is such a mad hare. **skip**, leap. **meshes**, nets (to catch the hare; in the case of the young man, wise counsels to restrain him). **good counsel** is called 'the cripple', the aged, cold-blooded adviser. Such an adviser is cautious and circumspect like the cripple. The contrasts between 'the brain' and 'the blood'; 'the *hot* temper' and 'the *cold* decree'; the madness of youth and the crippled movement of the aged;—are plain.

18-9. But this reasoning does not apply in my case—for I can not leap over the decree of my father.

reasoning, manner of talk or arguing. **not in the fashion**, not the way to; not suited to my case,

20. **O me, the word 'choose'**, alas! it is no word for me. The word reminds me that in the matter of getting a husband, I have no choice, I am absolutely precluded from exercising any personal choice.

22-3. My *will*, choice, in this matter, is *curbed*, restrained, by the *will*, the last testament and will, of my father. A quibble on 'will', as above on 'mean'.

23. You say I have no misery (l. 3), is it not miserable to be so restrained ?

nor none, double negative making an emphatic negative.

25-30. **inspirations** in the making of their wills. And this condition of the lottery, being thus piously inspired in him, may after all give you the right chooser in the man who rightly loves you. You need not apprehend you may get a wrong man. The virtuous father at the time of his death committed, by inspiration, which can not be wrong, the choice of a husband for you to Heaven.

28. **never be chosen,** *i. e.* the lottery will never etc.

one who shall. The folio puts 'you' between 'who' and 'shall'. But that misses the whole point of the remark. The will, being under inspiration, left every thing to heaven, and nothing to be done by Portia. The choice under the circumstances could not be one harmful or prejudicial to her.

31. **over-name them,** name them over to me.

thou : notice that in speaking to Portia Nerissa uses 'you', and Portia 'thou' to her. See on Shakespeare's use of 'Thou' and 'You' in Appendix.

33. **level at,** guess at : aim at.

34. **The Neapolitan prince,** prince of Naples. Steevens notes that the Neapolitans of Shakespeare's day, were eminently skilled in all that belongs to horsemanship ; hence Portia's 'description' of him.

35. **colt,** perhaps a double entendre, (1) a young horse, (2) a rough and heady young man. rash; hasty

36. **a great** merit in him. **appropriation** etc., "addition to his other accomplishments" (Furness). **him,** his horse.

38. **the County Palatine,** the Count or Lord of the Palatinate, a tract of land on the western bank of the upper Rhine ; a "North German" prince. Johnson was the first to suggest that the reference might be to a Albertus a Lasco, a Polish Palatine (paladin or lord), who visited England some twelve years before this play was written.

40. **choose another** ; I don't care for you. sourness of temper

smiles not because he has a frowning look, a "vinegar aspect" (I. 1. 54).

41. **the weeping philosopher** : a modern Heraclitus. This Greek philosopher was so nicknamed from his gloomy habits of life and always speaking sorrowfully about the follies of man.

42. **sadness,** gravity ; seriousness. A young man ought to be more jolly.

43-4. **a death's head** etc. ; a skeleton, a gruesome figure. **defend,** save.

46. **by,** about. What have you to say about him ?

47. This is the only consideration, there is nothing else in his favour to entitle him to the name of a man.

48. **it is a sin** etc., and therefore I will say nothing worse about him than that he is fonder of talking about his horse than the Neapolitan, and has a worse and more sour aspect than the German prince.

49. **he hath** etc., *i. e.* he is more exuberant in his praise of. **better bad,** worse.

50. **every man in no man,** has no individuality of his own but is a mere imitator of others ; he is himself 'no man' but has 'every man's' bad graces by imitation in him.

if, etc., *i. e.* he is always dancing and fencing. The song of a bird will set him dancing ; if he can't have any body else to fence with he will fence with his own shadow.

It must be noticed that Shakespeare is drawing attention to the most prominent traits in the character of the people of the various nations of Europe ;—the Italian is headstrong and fond of horsemanship ; the men of the Palatinate are gloomy and self-conceited ; the French volatile and fond of light amusements, dancing, fencing ; the English have an insular pride and reserve about them ; the Scotchman is charitable but bitterly hostile to the English ; and the German in his passing moods, "worse than a man" and "little better than a beast".

51. **a throstle** is a small thrush. **straight,** immediately. **capering,** dancing ; cutting capers.

53. **twenty husbands,** *i. e.* twenty different persons in him ; he is never one man but every man, twenty men, by turns.

54. **to,** until he is mad. **requite,** gave him my love.

55. **say.** Portia playfully uses the word in a different sense. Nerissa meant, how do you love him ; Portia says, 'I say nothing to him because I cannot express myself in English'. That also shows the state of her heart towards him. She could not love him.

58. **hath,** cannot speak in. The average Englishman does not care to learn other tongues. This passage shows that a smattering of Latin, French and Italian, was the ordinary stock-in-trade of a man of culture ; or at least that Portia herself was a cultured woman, having more than a pennyworth in these languages.

59. **You will** etc. ; you may swear with a safe conscience that I am ignorant of English. **a poor pennyworth,** absolutely little stock. **the** ; it shows her poor stock in that she does not know that the 'the' is wholly unnecessary in English.

60. **a proper man's picture,** the figure of a handsome man; but no better than a mere *picture*, a dumb-show, because he never speaks to me. **proper** in Shakespeare means 'handsome.' **converse,** talk.

61. **oddly,** queerly. **suited,** dressed.

62. **doublet,** jacket or coat. **round hose,** breeches. **bonnet,** hat. Now a lady's head-dress.

63. **his behaviour everywhere,** his manners are a mixture of the Italian, the French, and the German; he is a queer amalgam of the manners and habits of many countries.

Mixtur
or compou

65. **Scottish.** The word in the Folio is 'other', substituted, says Theobald, for fear of giving offence to king James's conntrymen.

66. **neighbourly,** such as neighbours ought to have for one another. The Scotch are remarkable for charity. **charity,** love.

blow by
the fist

67. **borrowed,** a humorous illustration of the 'charity'. He got a box on his ear from an Englishman, and instead of returning it, swore he would pay it back later on. There is a covert imputation of cowardice in the Scotch character.

kept concealed

censur
reproach

This has been supposed to refer to the defeat of the Scotch in the time of Edward VI.

68 The Frenchman swore too that the Scotish lord would repay the loan of a blow he had taken; or, if he failed, he would repay it himself. This alludes to the constant help the Scotch received from the French in all their wars against England.

sealed under. In a bond the principal signs his name and the surety signs under or beneath that of the principal. The Frenchman put his home down under that of the Scotchman as a surety that the blow would be repaid if not by the principal at least by himself.

another, another box on the ear; another blow.

75-6. Should the worst come to the worst, should this German prince happen to make the right choice, I will yet contrive to avoid him.

an, if. **fall,** happen. **make shift,** manage.

80-3. To obviate the chances of his choosing the right casket, put a glass of wine on the wrong casket, and you may be sure that the devil would prompt him to choose it. He is such a hard drinker he can not resist the temptation of going to the wine.

deep, full.

Rhenish wine, a sort of wine produced in the valley of the Rhine, and therefore cherished by a German as his national drink.

contrary, wrong; in which the portrait is not. Perhaps Portia knew where her portrait lay.

84. **a sponge,** a man that drinks wine as the sponge soaks water; a sot.

87. **home**, we expect 'homes', as in 'determinations' we expect the singular.

88. **sort**, way. Used here in its radical sense of *sors*, a lot.

89. **imposition**, *i.e.* the conditions imposed by the father on the choice of the caskets. These conditions are given in II. 9, never to unfold to any one what casket was chosen; if the choice was wrong, never more to woo a maid in way of marriage. Comp. also III. 4. 33, where *imposition* means 'condition'.

The fact that the suitors refused to abide by the conditions, shows that their hearts were hollow and that they loved not Portia but Portia's rich legacies.

90-2. Even though I live three lives of mortal women, I will not marry at all except one who chooses me in the way my father has laid down, *i.e.* by the choice of the caskets.

Sibylla, Wright says that Shakespeare uses it "erroneously" as "a proper name". But Shakespeare appears to have known that there were 'nine sibyls'; see *Othello III.* 4. 74. Perhaps he here means the Cumaean Sibyl who is said to have obtained from Apollo a promise that she would live as many years as the grains of sand she held in her hand. Lit. the word means 'a prophetess.'

Diana, the Roman goddess of chastity, as also of the moon.

92. **parcel of wooers**, band of suitors.

93. **but I dote**, etc., whose departure I do not earnestly wish for.

94. **I pray God**, changed in the Folio to 'I wish them', some say to avoid coming under the operation of king James's Act for restraining profane swearing on the stage.

95 ff. We now know how the prodigal Bassanio had come to have such a hold on the affection of two of the best of our species—Antonio and Portia. He was a scholar and a soldier, the type very much appreciated in Shakespeare's time, and not uncommon also.

98. **as I think**, in her embarrassment she had cried out, "yes, yes, it was Bassanio". Recovering herself she adds, 'I think so'. The reader is left in no doubt that she had treasured up the name in her heart and was secretly doting on the bearer of it.

101. **deserving**, who ever deserved. **foolish** is of course in modesty.

102. It is in short exclamations like these that Shakespeare flashes forth a whole history.

105. **The four strangers**, we have had *six*, and nor *four*. One suggestion is that Shakespeare originally put in four of the suitors, and that he subsequently added the English and the Scotch the better to please an English audience. The difference might be due to carelessness.

111-3. If he has the kindly disposition of a saint as he is likely to have the grim black complexion of the devil (being a Moroccan), I would much rather he should be my father-confessor than my husband.

condition, temper, disposition.

shrive, help me to confess my sins and thus grant me absolution, as the father confessor does in the Roman Catholic church. **wive,** have me as his wife.

114. **Sirrah** addressed to a servant.

115. Shakespeare's customary rhymes at the termination of a scene.

Scene 3.

We have already met with almost all the chief personages who dominate this play, Antonio who makes it possible, Bassanio and Portia, Gratiano and Nerissa,—and we are now brought face to face with the notorious usurer with his astounding audacity of a ferocious bond. It may be said in extenuation of Shylock's ferocity that he had at least some real cause of grievance against Antonio in particular and christians in general. One feels that a man like Antonio should not have stooped so low as to abuse and insult a fellow-man before men. And the Jews do not seem to have received from the christians that treatment which they might well expect as men and as citizens with equal rights in a free though christian republic. That treatment, moreover, was not at all countenanced and sanctioned by the laws of the state.

1. The persons enter talking together. It would make an excellent effect on the Elizabethan stage where the new-comers had to traverse all the length of the board from behind the arras hung up at the back to the front of it where they stood face to face with the audience.

well indicates that Shylock is deliberating.

ducats, so called because coined by the *Dukes* of Venice, each worth between four and five shillings.

5. **bound,** stand security.

7. **stead,** help, assist. **pleasure,** gratify ; oblige.

12. **good,** substantial, having an unimpaired credit, sufficient as a surety. Comp. *Cor.* I. 1. 16., "We are accounted poor citizens, the patricians good'.

13. **imputation,** suggestion.

15. **sufficient,** as a surety ; see above.

16. **in supposition,** in *posse,* not in *esse* ; hypothetical, not yet in

his pocket; which may or may not be realised as exposed to many risks at sea.

bound, sailing. **Tripolis** is Tripoli in Africa on the Mediterranean.

18. **upon the Rialto**, on the Exchange the place where merchants meet to transact business. It was called the Rialto from the island on which it stood. The word is derived from *riva alta* or high shore.

kind-

19. **squandered**, scattered; dispersed all over the see. The insinuation may be that Antonio has not acted very prudently in thus scattering his ventures.

20. **But** etc: explains how Antonio's means were yet in supposition. **boards**, planks of wood and may be washed away or be wrecked. **men** and may make mistakes fatal to the ventures.

22. **the peril of**, arising from.

23. **notwithstanding** all these arguments against him; his means being yet only in supposition. However, for three thousand ducats, he is sufficient.

26. **I will be assured**, by (1) thinking over the matter more at leisure, and (2) by speaking with Antonio.

29. Such an invitation in a matter of business in certainly unusual; but it is characteristic of Bassanio as a light-hearted gay gentleman who cared little for business.

[illegible]

29-30. Shylock declines the invitation. *Pork*, the flesh of swine, was an abomination unto the Jews. The other reason for declining to eat pork was fetched from the miracle of Christ compelling the devil to leave a human being and enter into a herd of swine. *Matt.* viii.

the habitation, the swine.

your prophet the Nazarite is a contemptuous reference to Jesus Christ befitting a Jew who held the Nazarenes, the people of Nazareth, in low estimation. **your**, *i.e.* of the christians. Shylock is not prepared to attribute that holiness to Christ which christians associate with him. **Nazarite**, *i.e.* a man of Nazareth; the same as Nazarene. In Shakespeare's time the latter word had not yet come into vogue and the distinction now made between 'Nazarite,' one dedicated to God, and 'Nazarene', an inhabitant of Nazareth, was unknown. **conjured**, is also a word of contempt, as though Christ's miracle was an operation of magic, and in no way followed from his divinity.

31. **so following**, et caetera; do such other things.

32. **the Rialto**, see above.

Who is etc. Such an exclamation was often a device of the Elizabethan stage to engage the attention of the audience in the interval of time that a man would take to walk up from behind the back to the front of the board. This is very common in Shakespeare. See also II. 4. 20; III. 1. 19; III. 2. 214-5; iv. 1. 15; iv. 1. 164.

Read 'who' after 'he'.

36. **a fawning publican,** a cringing servile fellow. The *Publicani* were the farmers of revenues under the Roman government; their treatment of the Jews would be, as Wright points out, rather insolent than servile. Hence the epithet 'fawning' would seem to be odd. In the New Testament 'publicans and sinners' are classed together as an object of contempt on the part of the Pharisees. Perhaps Shylock considers himself a Pharisee in relation to Antonio, *i. e.*, one higher posted in society than a christian; and hence calls him a 'publican'. The only objection to this explanation is that a Jew would not quote the New Testament; but Shakespeare cares more for his audience who would understand him than for the philological accuracy of Shylock. *fawning* was an epithet suggested by the naturally anxious and sad look of Antonio's face at this moment seeking to conciliate the Jew for his friend's sake.

Some needlessly and perhaps inaccurately explain 'publican' as 'an inn-keeper'. Webster cites this very passage in illustration of 'publican' in that sense. But it has yet to be proved that the word was ever so used in Shakespeare's time.

37ff. Shylock hates Antonio because (1) he is a christian, (2) he lends out money gratis and brings down the rate of interest, (3) he hates the Jews, and (4) he insults Shylock on account of his so-called avarice and parsimony, among the merchants on the Rialto. Note that two are national and two personal grounds.

38. **low simplicity,** mean foolishness; foolishly and basely, In the estimation of the usurer lending gratis is certainly the rankest and most suicidal folly.

40. **usance,** interest. The Venetian Jews were notorious userers. The word is derived from 'use', money received in payment for the 'use' of money lent.

41-2. If I can but once get him at an advantage, I will fully satisfy my old grudge of him.

upon the hip, at an advatage. A term of wrestling. **feed fat,** satisfy to the utmost. His grudge has been so long 'hungry': he would now 'feed' it.

43. **our sacred nation,** the Jews. A high racial pride is one of the redeeming features of Shylock's character.

44. *i. e.* on the Rialto. **congregate,** gather, assemble.

45. **well-won thrift,** honestly-earned gains. Shylock of course sees nothing dishonest in the taking of high interest; though the christians of the time abhorred it, as all sane men do even now.

46. **tribe**, race ; "our sacred nation."

48. **debating of**, calculating (mentally).

49. **near guess**, as correct a guess as it can be when I am only calculating from memory, and cannot refer to my books.

50. **gross**, the full or total amount.

51. **What of that** ; never mind, for though I have not ready money in hand, I may borrow of Tubal.

52. **Hebrew**, Jew. **tribe**, of the twelve tribes into which the Jews were divided. Here it does not mean as in l. 47 above, the whole nation or race.

torturing

53. **soft**, wait a bit. Note that Shylock has so soon forgotten the time for which the loan was asked. He certainly delights in racking Bassanio with suspense ; he may also, like a shrewd business men, like to have the amount and the time mentioned in the presence of Antonio so as to be sure that Antonio knew both and there might be no misunderstanding in the future.

uncertainty with
apprehension [illegible]

54. **rest you fair**, may God give you fair rest or peace. A meeting as also a parting salutation.

Shylock pretends to be surprised at Antonio's presence, and now turns to him.

55. We were just talking of you. *worship* as a title of honour still survives.

57. *i.e.* lend (money) by taking *excess* or interest, nor borrow by giving interest.

58. **ripe wants**, *i.e.* that are ripe and can no more wait to be fulfilled ; that must be satisfied instantly.

59. I will be a borrower for the nonce.

Is etc., Antonio says to Bassanio, Have you told Shylock how much you would like me to take from him ? **possess'd**, informed.

The text is that of the second Quarto, the objection to it being that Antonio rather abruptly turns from Shylock to address Bassanio. The first Folio reads

Is he yet possesst,
How much he would ?

he is evidently a misprint ; for it gives no sense, unless we fancy Antonio saying to Shylock ; 'have you made over the amount Bassanio would have', which explanation is not corroborated by Shylock's answer in the next line.

The first Quarto reads

are you resolved
How much he would have?

This of course is plain and clear. *resolved*=informed. But the reading in our text is plainer and more clear.

62. **I had forgot,** not exactly so, see on l. 54. Shylock puts the emphasis on *you* as he turns to Bassanio.

65. **advantage,** interest.

I do never use it, I never take interest; I am not wont to do it. In *use* there may be a hit at 'usury.'

66ff. Shylock "cites scripture" in support of his (usurious) practices. Yes, he says, I lend money 'upon advantage'. Where is the harm? did not Jacob score an advantage over his uncle when he served him? did not Jacob's mother secure an advantage for him by making him supplant his brother Esau in his father's favour? And what was the result? Why, Jacob throve, he became the third possessor of the patriarchate, and received the blessings of heaven into the bargain. Why must not I also thrive by my "ventures" and be similarly blest?

Jacob and Esau were two sons of Isaac, son of Abraham. Abraham was the first patriarch, Isaac was the second, and Esau ought to have been the third but the wise Rebecca (their mother) managed to secure the succession for the younger Jacob whom she loved more than Esau. Esau also sold his birth-right to Jacob for a mess of pottage.

Laban was the brother of Rebecca, and thus Jacob's maternal uncle. Jacob undertook to graze his cattle on condition that he would get as his remuneration all the streaked and pied yeanlings. And he managed to make the fattest and strongest of the flock conceive in sight of certain pied rods which he set up before them, so that he got all the strong ones and Laban all the feebler ones.

Both the practices, that of his mother to secure for him the succession, and that of Jacob himself to make him "thrive exceedingly"—are cited by Shylock as scriptural and therefore authoritative instances of it being lawful to adopt whatever means we like, short of stealing, to make ourselves rich.

The whole story is to be read in *Genes.io*

67. **holy Abraham,** *i.e.* Abraham, the first and greatest of the patriarchs; see again l. 148.

68. **By the wise working of his mother in his behalf. wise,** ingenious. **mother,** Rebecca.

69. **possessor** of the office and dignity of the Patriarch. Abraham was the first, and Isaac the second.

he is emphatic. Yes, he as the result of his mother's wisdom, otherwise he could not have come in at all.

72. **directly,** *i.e.* in money. He took interest indirectly in that he served his own interest by managing to get a larger number of Laban's ewes.

mark, etc., think of how Jacob managed to get an advantage over his uncle. and you will say that he did seek his own interest. As for 'what he did', see above, reference is to his management of the rods.

73. **compromised,** agreed.

74. **eanlings,** yeanlings, young ones of the lamb. **streaked and pied,** coloured.

75. fall to the share of Jacob as his remuneration.

76. **me** is ethical dative.

77. **fulsome,** it is difficult to say whether the word is from *full* or *foul*. Skeat derives it from *full*. The present meaning of the word suggests connection with *foul*, and here the word is equivalent to 'rank'.

79. **Fall,** let fall ; produce. **parti-coloured,** "streaked and pied".

81. **thrift,** gain, interest ; as above.

82-5. Jacob rendered service unto Laban for certain lambs that might or might not be streaked and pied, a thing which he could by no means bring to pass. If he happened to receive a great many, it was certainly 'a blessing' in his case.

Antonio means that this argument will not apply in the case of interest, for interest is not served for, and the gain that is looked forward to is brought about by human agency and therefore is not a 'blessing.'

venture is explained in the next two lines.

swayed and fashioned, made and ruled over ; dispensed.

85. Was the practice of Jacob cited by you to support your doctrine of usury ?

86. 'gold and silver' is singular both here and in Shylock's next speech, as implying one thing, namely, 'money'.

87. **I make** etc, my money *breeds*, multiplies, as fast as gold and silver.

confirmation

89. Shylock fetching his corroboration from the Bible, is like the devil citing Scripture. This line has now become proverbial.

90-2. An evil soul (like Shylock's) citing the testimony of the Bible is like (1) a man smiling outwardly but wicked at heart, or (2) an apple with a fair outside but rotten at the core.

goodly, fine-looking.

93. How often dishonesty hides itself under a veneer of sanctimonious piety. *Falsehood* here does not stand for untruth in general for that is not always fair outside but that particular kind of it which was here going to be perpetrated, namely, dishonesty or knavery.

94. Shylock pretends to be again indifferent to Antonio, and falls into another fit of musing.

95. **twelve**, *i.e.*, the twelve months of the year. **round**, large. **rate**, of interest.

96. **beholding**, indebted, obliged, the proper modern form is 'beholden'.

97. The chief ground of Shylock's grudge against Antonio is that he used to rail at him in the Rialto. Now has come the time when he shall have him on this hip. Perhaps it is in course of this speech he hit upon the idea, as the result of careful deliberation, of making Antonio pay for all these insults with nothing short of his life.

98. **many a time and oft**, certainly an odd pleonasm but still familiar. One commentator explains, 'many a time, and oft in the Rialto'—unnecessarily. The repetition serves to emphasise the idea.

99 **usances**, heavy rates of interest. See on l. 41.

100. **still**, always. **it**, your insults. **shrug** of the shoulder.

101. We Jews are always remarkable for patient endurance.

The Jews in Venice were required by the Senate to wear, some say, a red cross on the shoulder, and some, a yellow cap, as a badge or sign of their nationality. Shylock certainly points to it as he says this, and means, as we have a badge outside to distinguish us from others, so have we our great mental patience as a distinctive virtue.

So Barabas in the *Jew of Malta* asks his daughter to be silent for "sufferance breeds ease, And time may yield us an occasion."

tribe in the same sense as in l. 47 and not l. 53.

102. **cut-throat**, murderous; referring of course to his heavy, almost murderous rates of interest.

103. **gaberdine**, a kind of large, loose cloak. It does not appear that it was particularly worn by the Jews, though Shakespeare seems to mean as much. *Jewish*, in that case, would mean, because I am a Jew, in your hatred of a Jew.

104. **use**, (1) using for my benefit, (2) taking interest on.

106. **Go to**, an exclamation of impatience or contempt (here).

107. **you** is emphatic.

108. **void your rheum**, spit.

109. **foot**, kick. **cur**, dog.

110. **moneys,** singularly used as implying a collective idea. See on l. 83.

112-3. You call me a dog, and a cur, and now how can you expect a dog to lend you money.

114. **a bondman's key,** the meek and flattering language of a slave ; a servile tone. This is explained in the next line.

115. **bated,** abated ; held up. Whispering meekly like a slave and not speaking boldly like a freeman.

As Shylock says this he puts himself into the attitude of a slave.

119. **courtesies,** polite dealings (of yours). Ironical.

121. At Venice, it would seem, Shylock was not the only sinner. Such a reiterated promise of insult might naturally drive him to resentment. The mere fact that Antonio was a christian did not exempt him from the obligations of common civility.

124. **friendship,** a friend. Abs. for con.

125. **A breed for barren metal,** *i e.*, interest. Antonio did not know how money could breed, thought it a dead thing,—Shylock boasted that he could make it breed. **breed,** increase. **for,** in exchange of or in return for. The Folio reads 'of'. The whole argument is based upon Aristotle's quibble that because metal cannot naturally increase or multiply itself, usury is unjustifiable in that it by making the principal increase acts against nature. So Bacon, "It is against Nature for Money to beget Money".

127. **break,** fail in repaying. **with better face,** more justifiably.

128. **storm,** speak angrily.

129. Did Shylock sincerely wish to be made friends with Antonio, or was it merely an attempt to impose with better face the merry jest of a fatal penalty ? In the first case, Shylock is not entirely evil ; in the second, he is diabolical. This question will be discussed in the Intro. and the answer to it, according as we choose to give it, will form the key-note of our conception of Shylock's character.

130. **shames,** insult. **stained** morally as also physically by spitting on his cloak, kicking him.

131. **doit,** a Dutch coin of exceedingly small value, and hence a trifle ; an iota ; not a farthing.

133. This is kind which I offer ; this offer of mine is kind, *i. e.*, born of, the result of, my kindness for you.

were if it were sincerely meant.

134. **Go** and come were interchangable then. **a notary,** a lawyer or attorney drawing up deeds etc.

me is ethical dative.

135. **Your single bond,** *i. e.*, a bond signed by you alone and by no surety or witness. Shylock wants to give the whole transaction the appearance of a merry sport. Hence he will not stand on the technicalities of law.

There is a distinction in law between a single bond and a bond with a condition. Perhaps this distinction does not apply here, for Antonio's bond is a bond of the latter class and could not be called 'a single bond'.

139. **Expressed in the condition,** named in the bond or agreement.

forfeit, penalty.

140. **nominated for,** named, mentioned. Perhaps we should read, let the forfeit nominated be for etc.

equal, exact ; just the weight. Comp. *Haml*, I. 2.13., "In equal scale weighing delight and dole."

141. **fair,** "suggests Shylock's darker, oriental hue" (Furness).

142. **pleaseth me,** *i. e.*, it pleases me.

143. **content,** agreed. Antonio is sure that he will not break his day ; hence this exaltation.

144. **in the Jew** who is generally belived to have no kindness in him.

146. **dwell in my necessity,** continue in my wants. Bassanio sincerely loves Antonio and has a shrewd suspicion that the Jew's kindness might after all be no kindness at all ; hence his protest.

147. **it,** *i. e*, the bond.

151. **father Abram,** Abraham, the first of the Jewish patriarchs. See on l. 68.

what etc. : this is to be interpreted as a sincere or pretended surprise according to the view we choose to take of Shylock's character.

152. **teaches,** singular because 'dealings' is to be taken as a collective singular. Abbott suggests that is an instance of the Northern early English plural.

devilish

154. If we regard Shylock as utterly diabolical, we must say that he was pondering over that revenge which would remove a rival for all times from his way. If we do attribute some 'kindness' to him, he would certainly 'gain' nothing—for a pound of man's flesh is not 'profitable'—but Antonio would be humiliated and that would be enough for him.

155. **forfeiture,** the penalty of a pound of his flesh.

157. **estimable** in modern English is restricted to persons ; not so in the Elizabethan, as here applied to 'a thing'.

159. **extend**, offer ; 'hold forth'.

161. (1) Do not because I love you maltreat me hereafter. (2) Do not attribute unworthy or cruel motives to me, do not think ill of me or suspect my thoughts.

This carries us very far to the hope that after all Shylock was not perhaps altogether malicious and revengeful.

164. Direct him how this merry bond (a rather usual one) is to be written out.

165. **purse**, gather in a purse. **straight**, straightway.

166. **fearful guard**, "a guard that is not to be trusted, but gives cause of fear". He means Launcelot whom we shall meet with in II. 2. Shylock was perfectly justified in having his doubt about this man's fidelity. We shall presently see how he helped in ruining the Jew.

167. **an unthrifty knave**, a reckless vagabond. 'Unthriftiness' is certainly the greatest vice in the estimation of Shylock.

168. **Hie**, hasten ; come soon.

gentle. Antonio with his naturally simple and innocent disposition believes that the Jew has been completely won over or converted to kindness.

169. Believing that kindness is essentially a christian virtue.

170. Shylock has the mind of a villain—his 'fair terms', kind offer, therefore, are suspicious. See l. 90.

171. **dismay**, cause of fear.

172. **the day** of repayment ; after which the bond shall become forfeit.

ACT II.

Act II. carries us to Belmont. It disposes of two of the suitors of Portia and two of the caskets, leaving the third casket for the third suitor who succeeds. So far there is an element of artificiality. It also introduces us to what may be called the sub-plot of the elopement of Jessica with the christian Lorenzo, another incentive to Shylock's resolution to be avenged on his enemies. It further intimates the loss of all Antonio's ventures, and the possible forfeiture of his bond. As this happens on the one hand, on the other Shylock is hardened against all pity by the accumulation of a series of untoward and really calamitous circumstances. We are thus made ready for the catastrophe.

Scene I.

We have learned signed that Portia was pestered with many suitors. It is in the fitness of things that the very first man whom we actually find courting her should be a dark-complexioned Eastern potentate, vain-glorious not only of his physical courage but even of his swarthy complexion which he proudly attributes to his propinquity to the sun. He is a braggadocio, and, because in a trial of brute force he had slain the Sophy and a Persian prince who had won three fields of Sultan Solyman, believes that in a moral contest he must be as superior as Hercules was to his servant Lichas in strength. Such vain boasting, we may be sure, was not in the mood to give him a good wife.

Flourish of cornets, a loud set of notes on the cornets, a kind of brass treble wind instrument. A *Flourish* in Shakespeare always announces the approach of some august personage.

1. In the Folio he is called "a twanie Moore".

2-3. This dark complexion is due to my birth in the torrid zone, Africa. I was born and bred in the neighbourhood of the Sun, whom I serve and whose livefy I wear. The neighbourhood of the Sun means the equatorial regions—the great heat of the sun there naturally making the complexion dark or sun-burnt.

The swaggering boastful prince makes even his swarthy complexion an occasion for pride.

shadowed livery, dusky appearance caused by. *Livery* is lit. anything delivered by a master to a servant ; hence here the dark complexion given or caused by the Sun.

burnish'd is rather artificial ; it ought better to be 'burning'.

4. The fairest man born in a northern country. *fairest* in colour.

5. Where the heat of the sun scarcely melts the snow.

Phœbus' fire, the heat of the sun. Phœbus was the classical sun-god.

6-7. The point of the boast lies in this that 'red blood' was supposed to be the sign of courage. Let us by the redness of our blood prove whose love is the strongest or who has got the best manhood in him.

make incision, make gashes in our bodies. The allusion is to the custom of gallants in Shakespeare's time stabbing themselves in the arms or elsewhere, and writing the names of their mistresses in the blood so drawn or mixing a drop of it in wine in which their healths were drunk.

his, that northern suitor's.

8. **aspect**, appearance ; face.

9. **fear'd,** frightened ; caused (them) to fear (me).

10. **best-regarded,** either (1) thought most of, most highly valued, (2) fairest, having the finest looks.

clime, country.

11. **it,** this aspect, face of mine, *i.e.* inspite of my swarthy complexion. He has cleverness enough to know that his complexion might frighten Portia, and be a bar to his suit, and hence his boasts and apologies about it, and, finally, his readiness to change it—though it was received as a special mark of distinction from the sun, feared by the valiant, loved by the worthiest maidens—if only he could thereby get Portia's favour. This is his first offer of self-sacrifice in the cause of love—but the boastful manner is which it is made belies the sincerity of it.

12. **to steal your thoughts,** to ingratiate myself into your favour ; to make thee think better or more favourably of me, or think of me alone.

13. **terms of choice,** the matter of choosing (a husband).

14. A maiden might choose by the face or the complexion, but I cannot do so. **nice,** either foolish or fastidious. **direction,** guidance.

15-6. The lottery on which my destiny hangs makes it impossible for me to exercise my right of voluntary choosing.

the lottery, see on I. 2. 26.

17. **scanted me,** narrowed my chances for choosing.

18. **hedged me by his wit,** confined me within narrow limits by his sagacity or foresight. Theobald and Johnson read 'will' ; as in i. 2, 22 ; i. 2, 82 ; i. 2. 97.

19. **His wife who,** the wife of him. **that means,** namely, the lottery of the caskets.

20. **stood as fair,** double meaning : (1) had as good a chance of winning my love ; (2) had been in the same predicament as the other lovers whom I have already rejected. The latter was her real meaning ; the prince understands it in the former and flatters himself with the supposed compliment.

21. **comer for my affection,** *i.e.*, suitor for my hand.

22. **Even for that,** *i.e.*, though you say that you would not have preferred me to the other suitors, yet I thank you for the cold compliment of at least regarding me as much as any of the rest.

24. **To try,** so that I may have a chance of trying.

scimiater, short single-edged curved sword, used by the Turks and the Persians.

25-6. **the Sophy,** the Shah (of Persia). The title was first taken by Ismael, the founder of the Suffavian dynasty early in the 16th century. The word occurs in *Twelth Night* ii. 5.

a Persian prince etc., the reference is to the unfortunate expedition which Solyman the magnificent, Sultan of Turkey, undertook against the Persians, in 1490-1535.

Morocco's argument is that the Persian prince thrice defeated Solyman ; he himself defeated the Persian prince ; therefore he was the victor's victor and therefore the greatest warrior of them all.

fields, battles [illegible]

27-31. No ranting could be more hollow and more unlikely to win Portia. The Prince swears by his invincible sword that he would undertake the most hazardous adventures, *e.g.* frighten the sternest and the bravest, take away the suckling young ones from the she-bear mock the hungry lion, if thereby he could win her.

outstare, frighten by frowning at.

alas the while, almost the same as alas ! Lit. alas that the present state of things should be such !

32-5. I am sure of having won thee by the most daring enterprises but I am not as sure when it comes to a matter of lottery.

Hercules was undoubtedly greater than his page Lichas, yet if their greatness were left to be determined not by their respective deeds of heroism but by a throw of the dice, the throw might turn up in favour of the page, and so would Hercules be proved to be inferior to Lichas.

So, since the choice depends on pure lottery, may I too loose that which one decidedly inferior to me may win.

32. **Lichas** was the page who brought the poisoned shirt to Hercules which caused him his death.

33. **Which,** to decide who is the greater of the two.

the greater throw, the throw determining who is the greater.

34. **turn,** turn up. **weaker,** *i.e.* Lichas's

by fortune, it being purely a matter of lottery or chance.

35. **beaten,** proved to be inferior to. **Alcides,** Hercules. **page,** the Folio (wrongly) reads 'rage'.

36. **blind fortune leading me** into error, to the wrong casket. Fortune being blind would not see my worth and would not thus care to give me the success.

37. **that** : Portia. **unworthier,** than myself ; one who to me would be as Lichas to Hercules.

38. **Your chance** of not choosing at all or swearing if you choose wrongly never to marry in your life.

42. **In way of,** with a view to.

be advised, consider well what you will do ; do not be rash.

43. **Nor will not,** double negatives in Shakespeare make a strong affirmative. 'I swear never again to speak to lady in way of marriage'. Morocco is cock-sure of his own worth and believes it will not fail him.

confidently certain ; perfectly assure

bring etc ; conduct me to these caskets.

44. **forward,** go forward ; go. **the temple,** where the oath was to be administered. It was really a "church' or a chapel. Portia calls it a temple as more likely to be understood by a non-christian oriental prince. Keightley suggests 'table'—unnecessarily.

45. **good fortune,** 'good' is certainly only a meaningless but conciliatory compliment to fortune for good fortune—if 'good' meant anything—could not have cursed him. Or may we not read 'Good :—fortune then !

46. **blest** is 'superlative' in sound, 'blessedest', the happiest ; as the 'cursed'st' = the most wretched. Apparently an antithesis is meant.

Scene 2.

We are introduced to the clown of the play. This clown is not so important a personage as clowns generally are in Shakespeare. The Fool of Lear and Touchstone of *As You Like It*, are integral parts of the plays. Launcelot is not. Yet we could ill spare him. He is here shown as weary of a thrifty master with whom he would not sleep and gormandise and as bent on leaving him for a spendthrift adventurer, to whom he transfers himself through a ludicrous series of blunders committed between himself and his "true-begotten father".

The scene closes with the important piece of news that every thing was ready and shipshape against Bassanio's starting for Belmont, and that Gratiano would go with him. We have no doubt that Gratiano is meant to be a match for Nerissa as Bassanio for her mistress.

1-26. Launcelot is at a loss to decide whether he should stay with the Jew or leave him. His conscience says, 'Stay' ; the Devil says, 'Leave'. As Launcelot is meant to be the clown of the play, he naturally chooses with the latter. He argues thus, 'The Jew is the devil incarnate' ; 'to stay with him is to stay with the devil' ; 'no, I will run away'.

The whole speech is but a struggle between two sentiments in him. There is a similar struggle in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* between a good angel and an evil.

1-2. This is Launcelot's appeal to his conscience to agree to his running away. We are to suppose that a long debate has been going on in his mind, his conscience advising him to stay. He himself feels more inclined to run; hence he asks his conscience to agree.

serve me to run, agree to my running away; let itself be induced to acquiesce in my running away.

Some unnecessarily suggest 'will *not* serve'.

The fiend, the devil talkativeness; loquacity

3. This sort of garrulity is not uncommon in Shakespeare's lower characters as with those in nature.

5. **take the start,** *either* 'make the start or simply start' *or* 'take this opportunity, do not miss it'.

8. **scorn running with thy heels,** certainly a quibble is meant. Scorn with thy heels, *i.e.*, kick contemptuously at the very idea of running. 'Running with thy heels', is an affectation like Pistol's 'I hear with my ears'. The phrase occurs also in *Much Ado* iii. 4. 51.

courageous, either a meaningless compliment, or=acting bravely in thus advising me to leave the Jew. **pack,** be gone; be off. **via,** away. An Italian exclamation, *e.g.*, in starting a horse etc.

10. **for the heavens,** in the name of heaven. The humour lies in the Devil swearing not by hell but by heaven.

11. **hanging...heart,** very fondly and affectionately (like a man hanging about the neck of another) trying to make my heart agree to its suggestion, to make me resolve as it advises.

14-15. **did something...taste,** had some touch of a knave in him. He *did grow to*, *i.e.*, had a natural inclination towards something knavish. He had a kind of bad taste. Certainly the references are to instances of old Gobbo's conjugal infidelities—the roundabout expressions are an attempt on the part of the son to speak out and yet conceal. **smack** of a knave. **grow to,** Wright says, was a common phrase meaning burnt milk sticking to the bottom of a pan.

16. **budge,** stir

18. **say I:** thus comes in the third person who has been all this while standing aside but who is the most important of them all.

20. **bless the mark,** pardon me for naming the devil. The origin of the phrase is lost.

22. **saving your reverence,** the same as 'God save the mark'; or, if I may so say without offence to God or to you (the audience).

23. **incarnal,** *i.e.*, 'incarnate'. Shakespeare's low characters always miss the right word. So in Henry V. II. 3, the boy reports that Falstaff used to say that women were "devils incarnate"; on which the Hostess remarks, 'A' could never abide carnation; it was a colour he never liked". The Folio reads "the very devil incarnation".

in my conscience, to my true belief; as I truly think.

24. **hard,** hard-hearted. **with the Jew,** *i.e.,* with the very devil incarnate.

25. **more friendly,** because he advises me to run away from the devil.

28 **master Jew's.** He does not name Shylock perhaps because Shylock was too well-known to need to be called by name ; or it may be the country-bed fellow thinks that his son's master must be a well-known man in the city. Instances of such ignorant questions do not unfrequently happen in large towns.

29. **my true begotten father,** Launcelot's clownish logic that if a son can be a true-begotten son, why not a father too ?

30. **more than** etc., *i.e.,* totally blind. **sand-blind,** purblind nearly or half-blind. *sand* is from A. S. *sam*, equivalent to Latin *semi.*

high-gravel-blind is Launcelot's invention for a degree of blindness thicker than that indicated by sand-blind, in as much as *gravel* is thicker than *sand.*

31. **try confusions,** try to confuse him (by misdirecting him) ; play tricks. The First Quarto reads 'try conclusions' *i.e.,* expriments.

35. Launcelot is 'trying confusions', and the directions are not meant to be correct.

36. *of* **no hand,** we should now say 'on'. **indirectly,** Launcelot means 'directly'.

38. **sonties,** saints. It has also been taken to be a corruption of sante, health ; so the oath would be 'by the health of God' ; or *sanctity*, *i.e.,* by God's holiness. *Santi* is perhaps an affectionate abbreviation of 'saintie', diminitive of 'saint'.

hit, find out.

42. **raise the waters,** make him shed tears, (by telling him that his son is dead).

45. **an honest** etc., *i.e.,* an exceedingly poor but honest man.

46. **well to live,** "with every prospect of a long life" ; or, well-to-do.

47. **'a',** he, colloquial.

49. The humour lies in the son insisting on calling him 'master' and the father plain Launcelot, as the son of a poor honest man.

50. **ergo,** therefore. A bit of Latin to make confusion worse confounded. Launcelot must have learnt it from his betters.

52. **an't,** if it.

53. **ergo** etc., and therefore he is Master Launcelot (as the father without meaning it had addressed Launcelot as 'your mastership').

54-6. A bit of classical information which, like his *ergo*, Launcelot must have gathered from the conversation of his betters. Shakespeare might have intended to have a hit at the frequent display of pedantry in his day.

the Sisters Three are the three Fates of Greek mothology, Cloths, Lachesis, and Atropos. **branches**, odds and ends ; scraps and orts.

56. **you would say,** *you* is emphatic ; *i.e.*, common or uncultured people like you. Launcelot is speaking in the character his father has given him of a worshipful gentleman, and feels that he must keep the poor fellow in this delusion by giving a display of learning.

58. **Marry,** by (Virgin) Mary. **staff,** support, prop. He used to maintain me in my old age.

60-1. Launcelot pretends to take 'prop' and 'staff' in the literal sense.

cudgel, club ; a heavy staff. **a hovel post,** a post that supports a hovel or cot.

father, Launcelot is helped in his trick by the word 'father' being in those days used among the peasants for all old people as a mark of reverence.

61. **you.** Notice that Gobbo uses the respectful 'you' as long as he is under the delusion that he is speaking to a worshipful gentleman, and changes it for the familiar 'thou' when he recognises him.

63. **God rest his** soul if he be really dead.

66. **of the knowing me,** *i.e.*, to know one. **wise** almost= honest.

68. **give me** etc., with these words, which indirectly mean that he was the son, Launcelot kneels with his back to his father.

70. **a man's son** may be hid long but not truth which will certainly be out at length.

71. **Pray you,** the repetition of Gobbo's words serves to add humour to the speech.

73. **let's have** etc., lets us know each other and our relation and have no more confusion about it.

74-5. *i.e.*, I am always your son, in the past, in the present and in the future.

78. **man,** servant. The mention of the name of his mother is conclusive evidence of his sonship.

81. **Lord worshipped might he be,** may God be worshipped or praised that He has at last restored my son to me.

what etc., it will be remembered that Launcelot had knelt with his back to his father.

83. **fill-horse,** shaft or cart horse. *Fill* is another form of *thill*, a variant of deal, meaning 'a thick plank'. The Folio writes 'Phil horse'.

85. **grows backward,** *i.e.*, (1) grows behind him as his supposed beard was really his long hair growing behind his head, (2) thinner and fewer (as explained in the rest of the speech).

of, on.

89. **'gree,** there are many instances of dropped prefixes in Shakespeare.

91. **Well, well,** (1) very well, (2) an exlamation of impatiance suggesting that he did not like to talk on that subject.

95. **set up my rest,** resolved. The origin of the phrase is uncertain. It is commonly supposed to be derived either from gambling in which the highest stake the parties were prepared to make was called a *rest*; or, as Nares explains, from the game of primero in whicn *rest* meant to stand upon the cards you have in your hand in the hope they may prove better than those of your adversary.

Here the phrase also means, I have given up my *resting* or staying with my master for running away from him.

96. **A very Jew,** an out and out, a rascally one. **halter,** rope to hang from.

98. **you...ribs**; a confusion due to his anger, he means 'you may tell every rib I have with your fingers.'

tell, count.

99. **me** is the ethical dative.

100. **rare,** excellent. **liveries,** coats; suits. Bassanio never cared for economy, hence none was likely to be "famished" in his service nor to wear old and soiled liveries.

101. **as far** as the end of the earth.

103. **I am a Jew,** a pretty oath. Comp. *Much Ado ii*-3. 272, "If I do not lover her, I am a Jew."

104. **you may do so.** Bassanio has got the loan and is preparing to leave for Belmont. Spoken in continuation of some direction he has been giving his servant.

105-6. Note that Bassanio insists on "supper" and the "new liveries", just the most tempting things to Launcelot.

107. **anon,** soon, without delay.

110. **Gramercy**; French *grand merci*, much thanks.

wouldst *etc*, host then anything to do with me?

112. There is a humorous contrast between 'boy' and 'man' in a double sense.

113. **specify,** tell you in detail. Launcelot's attempt to use a big word before a well-bred gentleman.

114. **infection,** wish; Launcelot's blunder for 'affection'. This is Gobbo's attempt of a kind similar to that of his son noted above. Such instances of blundering are not uncommon among the lower orders of our country.

116. **the short and the long** is not the correct phrase which is 'the long and the short', the substance in brief.

118. **saving** *etc.*, see on l. 22; if I may say so without offending your worship.

119. **cater-cousins,** on good terms with each other; they do not pull on well together. The word (used here only by Shakespeare) may have been derived from 'quatre-cousin', *i.e.* one four times remoter or from *cater* connected with *cate* or *cake*, and hence a mess-fellow. The first is Dr. Johnson's, the second Hales's.

122. **frutify,** i. e. certify. This word has been made the ground of a suggestion that 'specify' above should be 'spicific' i. e. from 'fruit' and 'spice'.

123. **a dish of doves,** is even in our days not an uncommon persent in Italy. This intimate knowledge of Italian customs has been cited to show that Shakespeare had personally visited Italy.

124 **suit,** petition; prayer.

125. **inpertinent,** an impertinent blunder for 'pertinent'=in reference to, concerning.

126. **by,** from.

131. **defect,** blunder for 'effect,' 'substance'.

132. In Shakeapeare very often the Commoners speak in prose; their betters in verse. Note, also, the use of 'thou' in address to a servant.

thou hast etc, I agree to take thee in my service.

134. **preferred,** recommended. **preferment,** promotion.

135-6 A modest reference to himself.

137. **The old proverb,** viz. 'The grace of God is better than riches': or in the Scotch form, 'grace is gear enough.'

enough riches, wealth; and therefore you have the better commodity.

140. **father,** a reverential address to an old man.

142. **Give.** Bassanio says turning to Leonardo who seems to have been the steward of his family.

143. **More guarded,** more adorned with laces; more richly bordered. *A guard* was the hem of a garment, also, any lace on the

seams or borders of it (Hanmer). Hence 'to guard' is 'to adorn the borders of a garment'.

144. **in**, come away. **I can not** etc., you used to say that I was a dolt and could not by my own efforts get a service, see if I have not and that through my own eloquent persuasion.

145-7. The simple meaning is, 'no one in Italy has a more fortunate hand than mine, any man may swear to it. There can be doubt that I shall have good fortune.'

Launcelot says this as he opens out his palm to examine the lines on it. **table** in palmistry is "the palm of the hand extended" (Johnson). **fairer**, with a more significant 'line of fortune', i. e. the line extending from the foot of the forefinger, and running below the other fingers to the side of the hand. **which...book**, this is evidently "corrupt"; or, it may be one of Launcelot's 'inversions', meaning, 'if any man in Italy is prepared to swear upon a book (the Bible) that he has a fairer table, I will give him the lie'. It has also been taken to mean 'if any man offering or stretching out the hand in the act of swearing upon a book shows that he has a fairer table, I shall be hanged.' *which* in that case refer to 'man', as not unfrequently in Shakespeare.

147-8. **Go to** is an exclamation of impatiance, almost equivalent to 'come, come'.

a simple line of life, "the line *of life* is the circular line surrounding the ball of the thumb" (Staunton). It indicates 'long life'. Launcelot promises to himself good fortune, long life, and a trifle of some 15 or 20 wives.

148. **small trifle**, long and deep lines from the ball of the thumb towards the line of life (Halliwell).

149. **nothing**, but a trifle.

eleven etc, i. e. he shall marry eleven widows and nine maidens, making up not 15 but 20 wives.

a simple coming-in, a small income or earning, a small pittance.

150. **and then** etc, other lines indicate these.

151. **the edge of a feather-bed**, 'the danger of marrying.' (Warburton)

152. **simple scapes**, no very great danger in comparison with the good fortune he is likely to have.

153. **a good wench for this gear**, a good woman in this case of mine; to me she is kind and gracious. **For this gear**; in this respect; for promising me good luck and easy escapes.

155. **this** that I am telling you.

156. **orderly bestowed**, put in good order on board the ship.

158. It is thee feasts which we may well believe were not few and far between that helped to mar Bassanio's fortune.

hie, haste.

159. I shall do my best to carry out these your orders. I have a favour to ask of you.

163. **to you**, i.e. to make to you.

obtained, I have granted it you even before you have asked it of me—since there is nothing I cannot grant you.

164. **deny**, refuse. This is his suit that he would like to accompany Bassanio to Belmont.

166. **thee**, the change from 'you' to 'thee' strikes a note of familiarity.

hear thee is a phrase like 'prithee'.

167. **bold of voice**, much too frank or outspoken.

168. **Parts**, qualities.

169. *i. e.*, in friendly eyes ; to friends.

170. As in Belmont. That is what Bassanio is apprehending and forewarning Gratiano against. See below.

171. **liberal**, free, reckless, coarse.

Pray thee, *I* is omitted as in 'hear thee' above.

172-3. Temper thy 'wild behaviour' with some show of modesty. Put on 'a sober habit'.

allay, soften, temper. **modesty**, moderation. **skipping**, light and bounding.

174. **misconstrued**, as keeping bad company ; myself as reckless and wild as my companion. That would lose him the chance of getting Portia.

176. Gratiano in his own characteristic light and humorous way promises to be of good behaviour.

put...habit, assume a look of sobriety or gravity. **habit**, bearing ; behaviour. A play on 'habit' and 'habits' (dress).

177. **but**, only ; not always. 'Swearing' is a sign of ill breeding. Gratiano cannot altogether give it up,—however he would 'allay' it, and use it only now and then.

abate
mitiga

178. **Wear**, carry. May this be a hit at the Puritans ?

demurely, soberly, gravely.

179. **grace** is a short prayer before and also after meals. **is saying**, is being said.

hood, cover. Both to give him a proper demure look and to hide the sly glances that might betoken his flighty spirit. Men in Shakespeare's time used to dine with their hats on.

181. Practise all the solemn formalities of civilized society.

civility, politeness, civilization.

182-3. Like a man who is well-drilled in the art of maintaing a grave outward look to please his old grandmother.

a sad ostent, a grave appearance, a serious look.

grandam, a common contraction of 'grandmother'.

185. **bar**, exclude. This serious part I will not act to-night. To-night let us be free and easy.

gauge, test ; try ; sound.

186. It would be a pity to lose the benefit of your mirth to-night.

188. **boldest suit of mirth**, not your 'sober habit' ; be bold or unrestrained in thy merriment.

189. **purpose**, desire.

Scene 3.

Jessica, the Jew's daughter, is in love with Lorenzo, the christian. It is a romantic love consummated by elopement which (1) the more embitters Shylock against the christians, (2) makes him resolve on seeking his revenge by taking the life of Antonio, (3) is one more element in the extenuation of Shylock's ferocity of character, and (4) a contrast to the sober love between Bassanio and Portia.

2. **Our house is hell.** This is certainly due to Shylock's parsimony ; but no excuse for an only daughter whom, in spite of all his faults the Jew loved, to elope and that too with the best part of all his wealth.

a merry devil, a jolly fellow.

3. **taste of tediousness**, of its bitterness.

4. The *ducat* is certainly meant to be a bribe to procure Launcelot to carry the letter for her.

5 **soon at supper** which "was to be ready at the furthest by five of the clock" (II. 2. 105).

9. **in talk**, thus talking.

10. **exhibit**, express what my tongue should, the deep sorrow I feel at thus parting from you. Wright says that Launcelot means 'inhibit,' *i.e.* restrain.

12. **something**. The Folio has, 'somewhat.'

16-7. Though I have got my blood from him, I have not inherited his manners.

18. **this strife** in her mind between duty to her father and love for Lorenzo.

She would not only marry Lorenzo but also complete her desertion of her father by becoming just what her father had an abhorrence for—a christian.

Scene 4.

This scene carries us one step forward in the subplot. Lorenzo plans to carry off Jessica in the disguise of a page.

Elze remarks that masking was practised universally and at all seasons of the year more in Venice than in any other country in Europe. Even the Doge, the officers of State, and the Magnificoes, used to visit operas in masques.

1. **Nay,** do not object to what I am suggesting. It will be remembered that they had been invited to suffer at Bassanio's. It is from this supper they would slink away to disguise themselves.

2. **us,** ourselves.

3. **in,** "during" (Abbott).

5 **spoke us,** bespoken, engaged; ordered. Abbott makes *us*=for us, and explains, 'spoken for ourselves about torch-bearer.' Pope and others suggest that 'us' is a misprint for 'as' which gives good sense.

torch-bearers, Elze remarks, "were needed from the fact that the streets were a tangle and the street-lighting deficient.'

6. **'Tis vile,** *i. e.* a masquerade, unless it be *quaintly*, *i.e.* cleverly, artfully, ordered, is vile, and should not be undertaken.

vile in Shakespeare is not so strong as now. It means 'poor', 'not quite up to the mark.'

10. **An,** if **break up** the seal; unseal; open.

11. **signify.** Launcelot is rather fond of this word. He means that the letter would tell him everything.

12. **hand,** hand-writing.

14. **hand,** that of Jessica.

15. **By your leave,** *i.e.* permit me to leave you. It is a common formula of leave-taking.

18. **the Christian** is Bassanio.

19. **Hold,** we say 'look.' **this,** *i.e.* this reward for thy pains.

21. **Go,** come. Interchangeable in Shakespeare.

22. **masque,** masquerade.

23. Jessica will disguise herself as a torch-bearer and thus elope without courting notice. See l. 39.

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of, with. This use of 'of' is now obsolete.

24. **straight**, straightway; immediately.

27. **some hour**; 'some' is equivalent to the indefinite article 'a or 'an', 'about an hour.'

32. **page's suit**, the disguise of a page.

33-4. If Shylock goes to heaven, it will be for his daughter's gentleness. If she come to misfortune, it will be for her father's heathenism.

35-7. May never misfortune come across her way except on this plea that she is the daughter of a Jew.

36. **she**, *i.e.* misfortune.

37. **issue**, daughter. **faithless**, unbelieving; heathenish.

38. **peruse this**, read this letter.

Scene 5.

The only obstacle in the way of the development of the subplot is removed by Shylock accepting Bassanio's invitation to dine with him. Jessica is now free to act as she likes.

This scene is important as giving us a glimpse into the tender side of Shylock's character. He has an only daughter for whom his love is sincere. No Jew would entrust his keys to any body, Shylock leaves them with Jessica. Those who find cruelty even in this scene, cannot explain why Shylock should not have taken away the keys with him. If Jessica were really a prisoner, what prevented Shylock from locking up the doors behind him?

1. **thy**, perhaps we ought to read 'the'.

3. **what** is an exclamation of impatience.

gormandise, eat voraciously. Launcelot says to his father that he was 'famished' in the Jew's service; the Jew says that he had been 'gormandising.' Perhaps none is the correct representation of the case. Like all servants, Launcelot might have an inclination for self-indulgence which was sure to be checked and reproved by Shylock.

5. Live an idle life as thou hast done with me.

rend apparel out, tear the liveries; waste them.

8-9. And herein I demonstrate that I can do much without bidding. Launcelot's real object to get Jessica there to 'signify' by nods or gestures that the letter had been delivered, and that things were progressing happily.

10. Jessica's treatment of his father is inexcusable. These querries are cold.

11. **bid forth to supper,** invited to sup out.

14-5. Shylock's hatred for the christians is deep-rooted (though it must be confessed that of the christians for him was no less so). He will go out to sup in spite of his resolution not to eat, drink, or pray with the christians (I. 3. 30-4), if only to help to impoverish them by adding to the cost of the dinner. **prodigal,** spendthrift; wasteful. Referring particularly to Bassanio.

16. **Look** etc., note the touch of gentleness in the speech. Note the 'dramatic irony'—the audience know but not Shylock how Jessica will look to the house. **right loath,** very unwilling.

17. **a-brewing,** preparing. The *a* is a shortened form of *an* another form of *on*, a corruption of *in*.

towards, against. **rest,** peace of mind. foretell, foreshow —

18. Such dreams were supposed to prognosticate evil. It is portend no wonder that Shylock should dream of money-bags.

to-night, last night.

19. **go** for come.

20. **reproach,** Launcelot's malapropism for 'approach', here not altogether a blunder.

21. Shylock takes the word 'reproach' in its proper sense, and alludes to the christians 'railing' at him. Commentators think Shylock was anticipating that Bassanio would certainly reproach him when he had carried out his scheme against Antonio.

22-3. **An...masque.** This is equivalent to saying, they have laid their heads together and you are sure to see a masquerade.

An, if. **conspired** to have a masquerade.

This is also another instance of 'dramatic irony' for the audience understand that the conspiracy was a deeper one, not merely to get up a masque but also to rob Shylock of his daughter. But this neither Shylock nor Launcelot knows.

23-6. Bleeding from the nose was formerly supposed to portend something wonderful or some mischance. *Black Monday* is Easter Monday, so called because on 14 April 1630, on which the Easter Monday fell in that year, a great storm blew on the army of Edward III then besieging Paris and many of his men perished of cold. *Ash-Wednesday* is the first day of Lent. Most of this speech is of course nonsense. Launcelot means that his nose fell a-bleeding at six o'clock in the morning on Easter Monday four years ago, and that it was 'not for nothing' but as a sign that something wonderful or some calamity to somebody would happen, as in the present case to Shylock. **falling out,** *i.e.* the Black Monday falling or occuring on *Ash-Wednesday*: pure nonsense.

29. **vile squealing,** harsh screeching.

wry-neck'd fife, fifes in Shakespeare's days were made crooked, not straight, as now. The *fife* is a small flute, with a mouthpiece resembling the beak of a bird. Some take 'fife' to mean not the instrument but the player upon it, and explain 'wry-neck'd' as referring to the musician's head "looking away from his instrument".

30. **casements**, windows.

32. **varnished**, painted or masked. The practice of painting faces in masquerades was common enough in Italy.

34. **shallow foppery**, stupid frivolity.

35. **sober** as opposed to 'foppery'. The sobriety undoubtedly amounted to niggardlines.

Jacob's staff, reference is to *Gen.* xxxii. 10, where Jacob is said to have passed over the Jordan with a staff. Shylock had already alluded to the clever ways by which Jacob had enriched himself, and it is perhaps these that had endeared the memory of the Patriarch to him.

36. **of-feasting forth**, to go out to Bassanio's feast.

40. **for**, inspite of (Shylock's exhortations to the contrary).

41. Referring certainly to Lorenzo.

42. (1) Who will be worthy of being looked at by you. (2) As rich as the eye of a Jew, *i.e.* very valuable. The latter meaning is derived from a proverb, 'It's worth a Jew's eye', dating from the time when in the Middle Ages kings used to extract the eyes or the teeth of Jews if they refused to comply with demands made upon them for money.

43. **Hagar's offspring**, Hagar was bondswoman to Sarah, wife of Abraham, and by him mother of Ishmael, as Sarah was mother of Isaac. Ishmael was driven out into the wilderness and became the ancestor of the Arabs. Isaac got the patriarchate and became the ancestor of the Jews. Hence *Hagar's offspring* is a Gentile or an outcast. Shylock looks on all christians as such. He particularly applies the obnoxious epithet to Launcelot because as Hagar is said to have left Sarah "under the supposed grievance of too little indulgence", so Launcelot had left the Jew on a similar plea.

45. **patch**, fool (from the fact that fools or clowns used to wear patched or parti-coloured motleys).

46-7. The lazy Launcelot is compared to three different animals—the snail, the wild-cat, and the drone.

in profit, *i.e.* in the doing of those duties whence profit might result to his master. **the wild-cat** sleeps by day and prowls for prey at night. **Drones** are proverbially lazy.

49. **One** : Bassanio, the prodigal christian.

51. This has been taken to suggest that Shylock had not perfect confidence in his daughter—but would he then leave his keys with her? Perhaps he almost felt sure that the company he was going to would not be tolerable to him.

53. "Good watch prevents misfortune."

54. **never stale in,** always relished by; always present in. **thrifty mind,** *i.e.* the mind of the thrifty.

55. **crost,** thwarted; blasted (as by an evil star).

Scene 6.

Jessica robs her father and elopes in the disguise of a boy, a torch-bearer.

In the main plot we are informed that it is time Bassanio should start for Belmont, and that he has been waiting for the "masquing mates."

This helps us to transport ourselves to Belmont in the next scene.

1. **pent-house,** shed projecting from a main building; a protection from the weather over a door. It is said to be a corruption of 'pentice' meaning 'a sloping roof.'

2. **His hour,** *i.e.* when he had undertaken to join us.

3. **outdwells,** stays away longer; overstays.

4. Lovers are never tardy. On the contrary, they always come to the meeting-place before their appointed hour.

5-7. Simply, lovers are always faster in making new love than keeping old love inviolate. They are quick in making new love; slow when love has been made. Love is certainly more full of excitement at the beginning than when the object of it has been attained.

5. **Venus' pigeons,** a bit of mistaken mythology, for not 'pigeons' but 'doves' are sacred to Venus, the goddess of love. It is not the pigeons that seal the bond of love but Venus going in a chariot drawn by them or flying over their backs.

6. To ratify new-made love.

7. To keep unforfeited faith that has already been obliged. **obliged,** "bound by contract"; solemnly pledged. **unforfeited,** unbroken. This is meant to be a hit at Lorenzo whom the certainty of getting Jessica may have made lazy as the effect of fruition.

8ff. Gratiano gives a few vivid metaphors to illustrate the laziness of fulfilled love. (1) Appetite is stronger when one just sits down to a feast. (2) A horse is more fiery at the start than at the end of a race. (3) A ship has a finer trim when it sets out than when it comes back. Briefly, all things are with greater spirit chased than enjoyed.

8. **that ever holds:** this is always true.

9. **that he sits down with** Prepositions are not unfrequently omitted in Shakespeare. See i. 1. 125.

10. **untread,** tread back; "tread in reverse order, retrace" (Wright).

11. **tedious measures,** paces that are tedious to retrace. *measures* refers to the tricks or feats that horses are trained to perform in a circus. Even riding-horses were in Shakespeare's time taught to do these.

unabated fire, undiminished vigour or zeal.

12. Read 'with' after 'first', and see on l. 9.

12-3. The struggle for a thing is always keener and more vigorous than the enjoyment of it when it has been attained. Satiety comes with fruition.

14-9. How splendid looks a vessel, as decorated with flags, it puts out to sea from its native harbour, how fondly the wind blows upon it! How poor and wretched is its appearance as it returns tempest-tost, sails torn, seems opening wide, and blown about roughly by the boisterous winds! It is like the prodigal in the scripture, gay and unrestrained at the beginning, lean and hungry and beggared by his evil courses at the end. All things are more splendid at the start than at the end. Gray imitated this passage in his *Bard.*

younker, stripling, gay and prancing. This is Rowe's emendation of 'younger' of the Folios.

prodigal, evidently Shakespeare was thinking of the Prodigal Son in *Luke XV.*

15. **scarfed bark,** vessel or boat adorned with flags. **puts** out to sea. **native,** its place of origin.

16. The wind fondly blowing upon the vessel to drive it forward on its career of wild adventures on the sea, like a strumpet (a woman of ill-fame) with her blandishments seducing the prodigal into wild and unrestrained pleasure. In the case of both, the after effect is disastrous, the ship is weather-beaten, and the prodigal leaned and beggared.

the prodigal, the use of the definite article leaves out of doubt that a reference to the scriptural prodigal was intended.

18. **over-weathered,** weather-beaten; tempest-tost. **ribs,** sides. **ragged,** torn.

19. This line has a more particular reference to the prodigal. **Lean,** wasted in fortune; hungry.

21. **your patience,** *i.e.* I beg or grant me. **abode,** delay; staying away.

22. My affairs detained me or I would never have kept such kind friends waiting for me.

23. **to play the thieves** as Lorenzo was doing now.

24. **Approach,** come away.

25. **father,** (would-be) father-in-law.

Enter Jessica etc., it will be remembered that in Shakespeare's time boys used to play women's parts. Hence the disguise was not very difficult.

26. **more,** greater. To make assurance doubly sure.

27. **Albeit,** although. **know your tongue,** recognise you (to be Lorenzo) by your voice.

30. **Who** for 'whom', not uncommon in Shakespeare.

32. **thy thoughts,** perhaps '*my* thoughts' gives better sense. God knows and I know too thou art mine.

33. **Worth** the trouble because it contains valuable things. Jessica abuses the confidence placed in her, and robs her father deliberately.

34. **do not look on,** cannot see.

85. **exchange,** transformation into a boy. See l. 32.

38-9. If lovers were not blind, the god of love himself would not be blind and would blush to see the petty folly of his transformation in me. The god is supposed to be blind because his votaries are blind.

41. **shames,** *i.e.* serval acts of shame, (1) elopement, (2) boy's disguise, (3) theft.

must etc., perhaps there is a quibble intended on the physical and the moral sense.

42. The shameful acts I am committing are already (and without the necessity of being exposed in the light of a candle) too too frivolous or wanton.

Read 'in' before 'good sooth'.

too too in an intensive reduplication.

43. Holding up the torch, (the torch-bearer's business). **discovers,** exposes, whereas I ought to be obscured.

45. **the lovely garnish,** the dress that has made thee lovely.

47. The dark night is fast slipping away. The return of day-light will undo us. **close,** secret; concealing.

48. Second reason why they should haste.

49. **make fast**, shut. **gild myself**, carry on my person ; help myself to a few more of my father's gold coins.

51. **by my hood**, perhaps Gratiano's masked habit had a hood or cape attatched to it, and he swears facetiously by it like a monk.

a Gentile and no Jew. Dr. Johnson suggests that there is "a jest arising from the ambiguity of *Gentile*, which signifies both a *heathen* and *one well born*". The Christian Gratiano thinks that it is fortunate that she is a Gentile by nature, for she has a chance of being something better than a Jew.

52. Curse me if I do not.

53-5. Jessica is wise, fair, and true. *Fair* to look to ; *wise* in providing herself with her father's ducats ; and *true* as her fidelity to me has proved her. But Lorenzo did not see that she did deceive her father, eloping with him. Lovers are blind.

56-7. Lorenzo promises to be constant to one so fair, wise and true.

59. **masquing mates**, participators with us in this masquerade. Those who are to accompany them to Bassanio's feast.

62. **the rest** of your masquing mates.

63. It will be remembered that the supper had been arranged at five. So they had overstayed by over three hours.

64. **is come about**, has veered round, and is favourable to the contemplated voyage to Belmont.

The masquerade having served its purpose, namely, of covering the elopement of Jessica, is naturally dropped but without any impression of incompleteness on the mind of the audience.

66. **twenty** persons.

67. **on**, of. A common enough use in Elizabethan English. Notice how skilfully the audience are made to transport themselves in imagination to Belmont where the next scene is placed.

Scene 7.

This is the first of the three casket-scenes. Morocco chooses the golden one, and finds a death's-head in it ; Arragon the silver casket, and the portrait of a blinking idiot ; Bassanio the leaden, and the likeness of Portia in it.

Morocco has a presumtuous vanity in him and is well rewarded with a death's-head ; Arragon has a proud sense of his own merit, and as a fool meets with a fool ; Bassanio risks all, and gets the guerdon of self-renunciation.

Morocco's arguments :—There are three caskets here. One is of lead which has this threatening inscription on it, 'who chooses me must give and hazard all he has'. Give and hazard all for mere lead ? No, I will not. Next, there is a silver casket which says, 'who chooses me shall get as much as he deserves'. Why, by my birth, fortunes, graces and qualities of breeding, and, above all, by my love for her, I deserve nothing less than the lady. I will choose this—but let me just see what is written on the golden casket, 'who chooses me shall gain what many men desire'. All the world desires the lady. From the remote deserts of Hyrcania and Arabia, come many to see Portia. The leaden casket cannot contain her—it would be damnation even to think so. Why should she be in the silver when there is the golden casket ten times more valuable. It is a sinful thought to think she could be set in worse than gold. I choose the golden casket.

Morocco finds in it a death's-head with a scroll in the empty socket, saying, 'All that glitters is not gold. Many have perished for gold. He was bold but not wise. He was young in limbs but not old in judgment He had got what he deserved and lost the suit he did not merit'.

1. **discover**, show, uncover. See on II. 6. 43.

4. The first *is* of gold. *Who* is evidently an error for 'which'.

8. **dull**, pale. This contemptuous epithet must have signified to Portia that Morocco was not likely to blunder upon the right.

as blunt, as gross as the metal is dull. Perhaps there is a reference to the other meaning of 'blunt' also, 'plain-spoken', 'forbidding'.

12. **withal**, with it, with the picture. Get the picture and you get me along with it.

13. May some God help me to make the right choice. Shakespeare does not care to see that as a Moslem Morocco would be a monotheist ; he makes him a pagan and therefore a believer in many gods.

14. **back again**, in the reverse order a second time. Thus he begins with the leaden.

17. **must** is emphatic. **hazard**, *i.e.* must a man hazard all for mere lead ?

18-9. A man may hazard all in the hope of getting some advantage. None but a fool would hazard for mere lead. Notice that Morocco cares only for the metals, not for the inscriptions. Had he argued from these letters, he might have arrived at the right conclusion.

20. A rich mind ought not to degrade itself by choosing a base thing. Morocco arrogates 'the golden mind' to him, and

disdains to stoop so low as to choose a gross leaden casket. His presumptuous vanity ruins him.

There is a contrast intended between 'golden' and 'dross', worthless, base metal.

22. **virgin**: Silver is 'white' and 'white' is the colour of chastity.

25. Judge thyself impartially, and thus determine what thou deservest.

even, impartial. The metaphor is from a balance.

26. If thou valuest thyself by thy own estimation of thyself; if thy own valuation of thyself be the proper measure of thy value. This certainly is not a sufficient criterion.

27. **enough**, very much, a good deal.

29-30. To be afraid that my deserving may not extend so far as to the lady, would be to undervalue myself unjustly. Morocco has still his own self as the centre of all his arguments. 'If I say I do not deserve her, I only underrate myself. No, I do deserve her'.

afeared, afraid. Common in Shakespeare.

a weak disabling, a poor underrating; an unworthy disparaging.

31. I deserve nothing less than Portia herself.

32-4. He enumerates his many claims to deserve her—his royal birth in the neighbourhood of the sun, his fortunes, the many victories he had achieved wherewith he had embellished his state; his graces and qualities of breeding, his culture and refinement; and, above all, his love for Portia. The only redeeming feature about this man is that he has a sincere admiration for Portia.

35. I did not go to the gold but chose the silver casket.

36. **graved**, engraved; cut.

40. To kiss Portia. **this shrine**, either (1) Portia, the image in the shrine or (2) this temple, this fair body of Portia, in which the spirit of a saint resides like an image or idol in a shrine.

mortal-breathing Saint, the spirit of a Saint in a mortal body: this saint breathing or living like any mortal.

41. **Hyrcanian deserts**, deserts south of the Caspian. Hyrcania was the name of a tract lying in North Persia south of the Caspian Sea. It was notorious for tigers.

vasty, vast, boundless. It carries also the idea of 'a desolate waste'.

42. **throughfares**, thoroughfares. So many princes now tread these wilds and deserts that they are no more lonely and desolate. They have become as public thoroughfares.

43. **to come view,** the omission of 'to' in such phrases, is frequent in Shakespeare.

44-5. The boisterous sea whose huge waves smite the sky.

watery kingdom, ocean. **ambitious head,** stormy waves.

spits in, dashes against; scatters its foams upon. Comp. *The Tempest* I. 2. 4.

46. **the foreign spirits,** the high-spirited foreign princes. The idea is that as nothing material may stop a spirit, so no obstacle is strong enough to bar these princes.

47. They come as lightly over the boundless sea as though it were nothing but a narrow stream for them.

48. **three** caskets. **heavenly,** supremely sweet.

49. **like,** possible.

50-1. Lead would be too gross a metal to be used in making even the coffin in which her dead body should lie in the grave, far less a casket to contain her living heavenly picture.

50. **it were too gross,** lead would be too gross a metal.

51. **rib,** enclose. **cerecloth,** shroud, wax-cloth formerly used to wrap a dead body in. **the obscure grave,** *i.e.* in the obscurity or darkness of the grave.

52. **immurred,** buried, contained.

53. Seeing that there is a casket of gold ten times more valuable than silver. Wright points out that about the date of this play, in England, gold was to silver in the proportion of either 11 to 1 or 10 to 1. Morocco values like an Englishman.

tried, tested; refined.

56-7. Morocco is thinking of a gold coin called an 'angel' with the figure of St. Michael piercing the dragon embossed on it, and worth only 10*s*.

that's insculped upon, the figure of an angel is engraved or carved in relief on the surface of the coin.

58-9. On the coin only the figure of an angel is carved in relief on the surface, here an angel herself lies within. As gold is the proper metal to make the coin bearing the figure of an angel, so gold must be the metal of which the casket is made which contains not the figure but the very person of an angel, Portia.

60. **Here,** this golden casket.

Perhaps a rhyme is intended between 'key' (pronounced as 'kay') and 'may'.

61. **form,** image; picture. Evidently Portia knew in which lay her 'form.'

63. **A carrion death,** a fleshless, empty skull ; a death's-head.

empty eye, the mere sockets or hollows of the eye.

64. **scroll,** sheet of paper.

65. This is an oft-quoted proverb. Things are not to be judged by their mere external appearance. Appearances are not always realities.

67-8. Many a man has lost his life merely to have a look at gold. It has been said that men desise not to look at but to own gold. The answer perhaps is that the niggardly, those who are prepared to die rather than not have gold, make no more use of their gold than merely gratifying themselves with the look of it and its accumulation in the chest.

69. Things are not to be judged by their mere outward appearance. For instance, in a gilded tomb there may be worms. "Tombs, richly gilded, are the ornaments of many old churches at this day" (Capell). The Quartes and the first Folio read, "guilded timber doe wormes infold." Johnson suggested 'tombs' for 'timber' which some editors retain making it mean 'coffins' and set the metre right by omitting 'do'.

71. Had you been as old in judgment as you are young in limbs, *i e.* if you had a mature judgment and did not choose merely by the apearance.

72. **inscrolled,** written on this scroll, but given in the shape of the image of Portia ; *or*, you would have received an answer in terms far different from these.

73. **cold,** dead, lost ; has failed.

74. My suit is cold indeed and all my labour lost.

75. My life shall henceforth be a life of cold and frost,—it shall no more know *heat* or warmth of feelings.

welcome, frost is, Halliwell says, an inversion of the common old proverb, 'Farewell, frost', which was used on the absence or departure of anything that was unwelcome or displeasing.

77. To bid you a long farewell.

part, depart.

78. **A gentle riddance,** a happy deliverance ; I am fortunately rid of him. Portia abandons self-restraints and exults at her deliverance from a very unconegnial companion.

go, come.

79. **complexion,** disposition ; temperament. Let all vain braggarts like him fail to choose the right casket. She does perhaps refer merely to the appearance.

Scene 8.

Shylock finds that his daughter and ducats are gone, and breaks out into frantic rage. He has also learned that a Christian was at the root of all these calamities to him. He therefore resolves to feed fat his ancient grudge on another Christian whom he has now caught in the hip. We are also told in this scene that a ship richly fraught had miscarried in the Channel, and we think of Antonio and the heavy reckoning he will have with the Jew if he fails.

4. 'The villain Jew' and 'the dog Jew' (l. 14), were the ordinary expressions of Christian raillery which the Jews had to bear at Venice.

raised, roused, awoke from sleep. Shylock had come back from the supper at dead of night, found the loss, and immediately gone to the Duke, and made him come out to search Bassanio's vessel which was already under sail.

8. **gondola**, a small Venetian passenger-boat, the ordinary vehicle of traffic in the canals.

9. **amorous**, love-sick.

10. The word of the royal merchant was enough for the Duke.

12. **passion**, outburst of violent grief.

13. **variable**, changeful ; the grief passing from one subject to another.

16. **O my christian ducats**, this is the very wildness of confused passion. He jumbled up two cries, O the vile Christian, who robbed me of my daughter, and O my ducats. It stings Shylock that his daughter should flee with none but a Christian who hated him and his nation.

18-19. Shylock in his passion sees no end to the loss inflicted on him, and exaggerates the amount.

double ducats, *i.e.* not two but double two bags of ducats.

21-2. Shylock does not seem to be so impatient about his daughter as about his ducats, and he would not perhaps care for her if the law could give him back his money and his stones.

23-4. The street-boys ridicule him by mimicing his cries.

25-6. If Antonio fails to pay on the appointed day, the Jew will surely wreak his vengeance on him. The Jew will make a Christian pay for the loss a Christian has put on him.

This establishes the required connection between the main-plot and the sub-plot of the play. Antonio will be made to pay for the sins of Lorenzo.

26. **Marry**, by Virgin Mary.

27. **reason'd**, talked.

28. **the narrow seas**, the English Channel.

29. **miscarried,** was wrecked or lost.

30. **richly fraught,** carrying a rich cargo ; laden with valuable cargoes.

31. **upon,** of. **he,** the Frenchman.

32. **in silence,** in my heart of hearts.

33. **you were best,** a common enough idiom in Elizabethan English ; it would be best for you.

34. For the suddenness of the shock may overwhelm him.

35. **treads not,** does not live upon ; is not to be found on.

37. He would come back speedily ; he would cut short his stay in Belmont.

39. **slubber,** spoil by haste. Originally, 'to soil' ; hence 'to mar.'

40. Stay there until the time becomes ripe for you to do your business successfully.

41, **of,** from.

42. Let it not disturb your loving mind ; let it not enter as an unwelcome stranger into your mind which should be all possessed or filled with love.

mind of love, loving mind.

44. **ostents of love,** displays or demonstrations of love. For *ostents*, see on II. 2. 182.

45. **conveniently become,** suit ; befit. *conveniently* is used in the original sense—fittingly ; suitably.

46. **even there,** *i.e.*, even as he was speaking these words.

big, filled.

48. And wonderfully moved with affection for Bassanio. **sensible,** sensitive ; touched, moved.

50. He loves the world only for him, *i.e.*, only because he (Bassanio) is in it.

52. Relieve the heaviness that he so fondly hugs ; enliven the sadness that hangs on him.

embraced heaviness, the sorrow the hugs or delights to keep to his heart.

Scene 9.

This is the second of the casket-scenes. The prince of Arragon chooses the silver casket and gets what he deserves, namely, the portrait of a blinking idiot.

Arragon's arguments :—There are three caskets, of gold, silver, and lead. The lead asks one to hazard all one has. No, I will not hazard aught for base lead. The gold says, 'Who chooses me shall gain what many men desire'. That many may include the barbarous multitude, and shall I reckon myself no higher and no worthier than these? Let me see what the silver casket says, 'Who chooses me shall get as much as he deserves'. That appeals to one's merit. Merit is or ought to be the true touchstone of all a man gets or deserves. I have great merit in me and deserve a great reward. I choose the silver casket.

Note that the difference between the prince of Morocco and the prince of Arragon is that whereas the former has yet a sentiment of admiration for Portia and centres much of his argument around her, Arragon makes not a single reference to her but is wholly taken up with foolish self-conceit. He thus deserves a fool's head which he gets.

It is to be noted too that they are both without that feeling of love which alone was the passport to Portia.

A German critic objected to this scene as being merely a repetition of scene 7 without contributing to the movement of the drama. The dramatic necessity of the scene lies in this that the period of three months which must elapse for the bond to become due, has to be covered, and it could not have been covered more dramatically by anything than by the actual passing upon the stage of a succession of events before the eyes of the audience. Hence we are shown that while Bassanio is on his way to Belmont, other suitors have been coming and going.

1. **draw** apart, so as to "dis-cover" the caskets.

2. **The Prince of Arragon** was a Spanish grandee, and as such deeply in love with himself.

taken in 'the temple', see II. 1. 44.

3. **election,** choice.

5. **I,** *i.e.* her portrait.

6. **Straight,** straightway; immediately.

7. **more speech,** any further word.

11. **fail of,** *i.e.* to choose.

13. Read 'mar-ri-age.'

15. Miss the good fortune of choosing the right casket.

18. **hazard**; remember the inscription on the leaden casket. Portia perhaps saw that the Prince was too self-conceited to understand her, and hence did not make much of using the very word which might serve as a key to the right election.

19. **addressed,** prepared (to abide by the three injunctions).

Fortune etc., may fortune now lead me to what my heart hopes or desires, to Portia; may fortune be propitious to me.

20. **base,** like Morocco's *dull* in l. 8, is certainly an indication of his personal dislike for the leaden casket, a relief to Portia.

22. Lead must look fairer than it is before I will hazard all for it. This man too judges by the external appearance.

25-7. By that many may be meant the foolish multitude who always choose by the mere external show, by the mere 'giddy pleasure of the eye', who cannot see deeper than the eye looks, cannot appreciate things by their intrinsic value.

In modern English, we should say, 'the fool multitude may be meant by that many'.

meant By, "meant for" (Malone).

fond eye doth teach, the mere external appearances that entice the eye.

28-30. The foolish multitude judge by their eyes and have not the power of looking into things and estimating their intrinsic worth. They are thus liable to error. They act like the martlet that builds its next not within but outside a house and is thus exposed to the full force and violence of the weather and to all manner of accidents.

28. **Which,** the fond eye which. **pries,** sees, looks. **the interior,** the essential or intrinsic value of a thing as distinguished from its mere external appearance.

the martlet is a species of the swallow.

29. **Builds** its next on the outward wall, *not* in the interior of a house. **in the weather,** exposed to rough winds and inclemencies of the weather.

30. *i.e.* Builds even in etc. **force,** violence, shock. **road,** direct way. **casuality,** accidents. In the direct way of accident where its shock is likely to be the greatest. The martlet builds its nest on the outside of walls where it is exposed to the shock and violence of the weather. Similarly the multitude judge by the outside of things, and are thus liable to errors and calamities.

32 I disdain to do what the base multitude would do. **jump,** agree.

around

33. **rank me,** put myself on the same level; herd. The Spanish grandee with his aristocratic pride, is true to himself.

34. **treasure-house,** chest, in which there is the treasure of Portia's image.

by his merit

37-9. Let none seek to cheat fortune (to give him what he does not deserve) and to get honours and distinctions, without having real inward merit.

37. **who shall go about,** let none go about or seek.

38. **To cozen fortune,** to cheat her to give him what by his merit he does not deserve.

be honourable, *i.e.* to get honours (without meriting them).

39. **stamp,** possession.

40. To get honour which by his merit he has not deserved; to get a dignity which he does not deserve by the possession of sterling merit. genuine; of the excellent quality

41. **estates,** dignity, status; *not* property.

degrees, high positions; ranks.

42. **Were not derived corruptly,** were not obtained in corrupt ways but depended on the merit of the claimant.

clear honour, pure unsullied reputation. free gift; present; donation

43. **purchased,** *not* by bribes or gratuities but obtained by merit.

44·45. If high offices belonged to men who by merit deserved them, and not to those who obtained them corruptly, many who now arrogate superiority to themselves would have to go without it, and many who now serve would then be masters.

44 **cover,** keep their hats on their heads as superior in rank or office. **bare,** bareheaded; that now take off their hats before others.

45. **be commanded,** would be servants. **that command,** that now hold the superior position of masters.

46-9. How many of those who enjoy honour would be found out to be low and mean, and how many of those who are now ignored or down-trodden would be elevated to honour.

Dr. Johnson explains, "How much meanness would be found among the great, and how much greatness among the mean".

The metaphor is taken from winnowing. From among the true seeds might be gleaned some that are rotten; and from the chaff might be picked out some that are true seeds. As not unfrequently in Shakespeare, there is a confusion and mixture in the metaphor.

low peasantry, meanness; rusticity. **gleaned,** picked out; sifted.

Dr. Johnson objects to the expression, 'Since men are always said to *glean* corn though they may *pick* chaff, the sentence had been more agreeable to the common manner of speech if it had been written, How much low peasantry would then be *picked*...how much honour *gleaned* etc."

47. **of honour,** 'of' is appositional; honour is the true seed.

48. **chaff and ruin,** 'chaff and bran" (Staunton); as *ruin* literally means a heap, there may be a hendiadys here = a heap of chaff.

ruin: the confusion in the metaphor from winnowing originaters with this word. It brings in a new metaphor, meaning, some who are now cast off among the waste and lumber, may be picked out and varnished anew with honour.

49 **new-varnished**, dressed afresh with new honours. This word has roused the ardour of Shakespearean commentators, and one of them has devoted six large quarto pages to the justification of certain emendations he proposes to make Shakespeare's metaphor consistent. This is the very high gallop of criticism.

51. **assume desert**, claim that which I deserve; take to myself what I deserve; *not* simply claim that I have merit or deserve much. For is he not cocksure of his merit?

53. Spoken aside. If considered to be directly addressed to Arragon, it would give Portia a feature of character she does not possess.

for that etc., namely, a fool's-head. [illegible]

54. **blinking**, open and shutting the eyes; with a civil leer at the corner of the eyes.

55. **schedule**, scroll; piece of writing.

56. **thou**, the portrait of the idiot.

57. Read 'art thou to' after 'unlike'. How much unlike is this portrait to what I hoped to get and what I really deserved, namely, Portia.

58. **have**, everywhere else the word is 'get'. Arragon is reciting from memory; hence the slip.

59-60. Spoken to Portia, not to himself.

deserts, merits: deservings.

61-2. This reply is obscure.

Arragon says, 'Did I deserve nothing better than a fool's head?'

Portia replies (and her reply may be interpreted in two ways): (1) How can I say? You committed the offence of making a *wrong* choice. You must not now sit as judge on your own case, and say, you deserved better. The judge and the defendant must be two persons, the two offices are distinct and separate, even opposed to one another. (2) I have offended you in that your hopes about *me* were disappointed, I am the culprit before you, I cannot also stand forth as the judge and decide whether you deserved this or better. I cannot be both the judge and the offender.

criminal

opposed, contrary.

63. The silver was refined by being repeatedly put in fire.

63. The judgment is sound and tried that never arrives at a wrong conclusion; makes a wrong. Implying that Arragon's judgment was not such but crude and immature.

hugs

66-7. There are some men who fondly cherish delusions; their happiness is also delusive.

Arragon's self-esteem was but a delusion.

shadows kiss, hug delusions; fondly believe them to be real.

embrace closely, to clasp to the breast [illegible]

shadow's bliss, a delusive, no real, happiness; momentary, fleeting, happiness; happiness having no more reality than a shadow.

68-9. I know there are many men living who have got white hairs on their heads but are really fools and have not profitted by the wisdom of age. Such a fool was this one whose portrait is here enclosed. The implication is that Arragon was a fool and would remain a fool even in old age. Proud self-esteem was not likely to give him opportunities of learning from age.

I wis, is derived from A. S. 'gewis' changed in the 13th century to 'ywis' or 'iwis'; hence it came to be divided into a pronoun and a verb—I wis. *wis* is from *witan*, to know.

Silvered o'er, having a head of white hairs.

70-1. But Arragon by his oath could not take any other woman to wife. Should he break his oath and marry, he would always carry the fool's-head on his shoulders.

72. **are sped,** are dismissed; a sarcastic reference to a stranger being 'sped' or wished 'god speed' on his journey.

73-4. The more I linger here, the more foolish I appear. **more,** greater.

75. His own natural head.

76. His own and that which the portrait has given him. See l. 71.

78. **wroth,** misfortune, calamity, disaster. Some spell 'wrath' meaning 'anger'.

79. **singed,** burnt.

80. **deliberate,** perhaps a quibble is meant (1) deliberating, calculating their own worth foolishly, and (2) mature in foolishness, ripe in folly.

when they do choose, in the matter of their choice, the result of all their deliberation.

Cunning; Craftiness; [illegible]

81. "They are so over-wise that their subtlety leads them to make a wrong choice" (Wright). Their wisdom just serves them to make a wrong choice.

[illegible]

82. **saying,** proverb. **no heresy,** not untrue; has a grain of truth in it.

83. **wiving,** marriage. None of these depends on a man's wisdom or deliberation. It is fortune that regulates both.

[illegible]

85. **my Lord:** either "a sportive rejoinder to the servant's abrupt exclamation" (Dyce); or a rebuke to him for the pompous

tone of his query. May be the former showing Portia's joy at having got rid of two undesirable suitors.

88. **his lord**; undoubtedly Bassanio.

89. **sensible regreets,** tangible gifts, not mere 'courteous breath,' or empty compliments; substantial greetings in the shape of 'gifts of rich value'. **sensible,** evident to the senses; tangible. **regreets,** salutations; greetings. It was in Bassanio's manner to be lavish of his gifts.

90. **To wit,** namely. **besides,** in addition. **commends,** commendations; salutations. **breath,** words.

91. **yet,** up to this time.

92. **likely,** promising. Perhaps the meaning 'good-looking' or 'pleasing in appearance' has little bearing here. The servant evidently means, as he goes on to say, if the ambassador be such, one does not know what his lord will be.

93-5. April goes before and announces the approach of summer, but even a rich April day never heralded the coming of so rich a summer, as this messenger does his lord.

94. **costly,** gorgeous; adorned with all manner of flowers and splendid sunshine.

95. **fore-spurrer,** one who has spurred or come riding before his master; a messenger.

97. **some kin,** related.

98. **high-day wit,** high-flown, extravagant compliments. **high-day** is holiday. 'Holiday wit' is likely to be richer and choicer than common everyday wit, as holiday dresses are. We have "holiday phrases," "he speaks holiday," in Shakespeare.

100. This mannerly or well-mannered *post*, messenger, of Cupid, the young lover, Lord Love.

101. Cupid, lord of love, let it be Bassanio if thou will. May it be Bassanio.

The Folio reads "Bassanio lord, love if thy will it be". Theobald changed into "Bassanio,—Lord Love! if' etc. The reading in the text is Rowe's.

The very word 'Venetian' has suggested to both Portia and Nerissa that it could not but be Bassanio.

ACT III.

In the first Act we have seen Bassanio preparing to start; the second closes with the intimation that he has arrived at Belmont; the third will show that he has chosen successfully. But as there is a skeleton in every man's cupboard, Bassanio has not yet recovered from the first hey-day of love when a letter from Antonio announces that he cannot but lose his day and let the Jew work his will on him. Things break up abruptly; Bassanio hurries for Venice, Portia instantly conceives the idea of rendering herself serviceable to her new lord and husband and his dear friend who had made it possible for them to meet.

The subplot has developed on all fours with the main. Lorenzo and Jessica have also reached Belmont, and are living happily in Portia's house which is astir with preparation for the solemnization of a double marriage.

to be filled and sink
Goodwin

Scene 1.

The vague rumour that a Venetian vessel richly fraught had foundered in the channel, materializes into the loss of Antonio's fortune. Shylock puts him in jail, and is awaiting the great day of his revenge.

1. **the Rialto,** see on I. 3. 18.

2. **unchecked,** uncontradicted; uncorrected.

3. **lading,** cargos. **the narrow seas,** the English Channel. See II. 8. 28.

4. **the Goodwins,** the Goodwin Sands at the mouth of the Thames. **I think** etc.; suggests that a foreigner is speaking.

5. **flat,** a tract covered by shallow water. **carcases,** frame works; hulls. **tall,** big, large or fine.

6. **if** etc.; if rumours heard about the place be true. *Report* or rumour, is a *gossip, i.e.* as talkative as an old woman, and therefore saying many things that are true and false. If this report of her's be true, the place is a dangerous and fatal one, strewn with many wrecks.

7. **of,** as regards.

8-10. I wish that the reports concerning the Goodwin Sands be false, even as a talkative old woman attempting to convince her neighbours that she was lamenting the death of a third husband would be false. The very fact that it was her *third* husband would give the lie to her weeping.

knapped, nibbled ; bit off short pieces. That old women were fond of ginger is to be inferred from *Measure for Measure*, iv. 3. 5.

[illegible]

11. **slips of prolixity**, prolix slips ; long-winded, gossipy talk, *i.e.* briefly.

crossing...talk, keeping to the beaten path of conversation ; in plain and ordinary words. There is evidently a ring of hollowness in affected phrases like these.

13. **to keep his name company**, to be appropriate to describe him ; to join to his name.

14. Come, put an end to this longwinded talk of yours. Let us have the long and the short of it. Bring your talk to an end.

16. That this plain fact should have cost the two so much energy of talk and such a waste of expressions, is significant that they secretly chuckle at the news or idea of Antonio's loss.

18. **betimes**, in good time. **cross**, interrupt. **my prayer**, it has been said that the prayer was not his but his friends,—and so Warburton proposed to read '*thy* prayer'. But Salanio makes the prayer his by saying 'Amen' and does not like the devil should cross him before he could say that word. And he had good reason to be afraid for the devil was actually walking up from behind the stage.

21. **none so well**, none knows so well as you do.

24. **the wings**, the disguise she wore. **withal**, with.

25. **the bird was fledged**, the girl was old enough to feel the promptings of love in her heart. **fledged**, marriageable.

26. **complexion**, nature, disposition. **dam**, mother-bird.

28. **damned**, a play upon 'Dam'. Such quibbles even in the most serious moments are not uncommon in Shakespeare.

33-4. **difference** in colour. **jet** is black ; **ivory** white.

35. **Rhenish**, wine with a slightly yellowish colour. See I. 2. 85.

36. **match**, bargain ; a losing game.

38. **prodigal** because he borrowed for an extravagant friend, and also because he lent money without interest.

39. **was used to**, *i. e.* wont or accustomed. **smug**, spruce, smartly-dressed.

40. Ask him to be careful that he repay me duly for if he break his bond, I will teach him a lesson.

42. **for a Christian courtesy**, out of a Christian feeling of charity. With a sneer on 'Christian'. Let him see if his Christian courtesy will save him.

43. **forfeit**, break his day.

45. Comp. I. 3. 153-5. And remember how many adverse or calamitous circumstances have driven him to desperation. It is neither kind nor true to say that the man had conceived of revenge even at the beginning. Circumstances such as those that overwhelmed him might well have made many a less parsimonious man resolve to exact a due to the utmost. Shylock has his personal grounds against Antonio, and he has, what seems to be a stronger motion with him here, his nation's wrongs to avenge on the head of a doomed representative Christian.

The speech that follows is not the embittered cry of Shylock's heart against those who have conspired to ruin him, but the cry of one persecuted race against another, of one down-trodden and oppressed nation against its oppressors. It is the cry of Jewish humanity against Christian intolerance; it is the cry of the poet's heart against the cruelties practised in all Christian countries on the unfortunate Jewish money-lenders. It is his stern condemnation of one species of mediaeval barbarity.

46. **disgraced**, *e.g.*, by spitting on him, railing at him. **hindered**, made me lose by lending out money gratis.

47. **mocked** because, as he was pleased to say, my gains were ill-got.

48. **thwarted**, prevented; frustrated.

50. **dimensions**, limbs. **affections, passions.** formerly "affections were objective, passions subjective. Affections are influenced through the eyes, passions are stirred from the heart."

53-4. **warmed...summer**, figure *chiasm*.

55. **in that**, *i.e.*, in the matter of revenge.

59. **his humility**, the Christian's kindness or benevolence. Why, his kindness takes the shape of revenge. The Christians are enjoined to practise humility, "the mother of all the virtues", and boast of their Christian humility. But where is this humility, if he be wronged by a Jew? Why, it flares up in the shape of revenge.

60. **sufferance**, see on I. 3. 98; how should he take it or suffer it.

61. **The villany**. This seems to me to be another piece of evidence that Shylock was not resolved on revenge even from before. He knows that revenge is a villany but yet he will do it by Christian example.

62. **it shall** etc., almost equivalent to 'a curse on me if I do not improve upon the lesson of revenge taught me by the Christians,' if I do not surpass them in the act and measure of revenge.

66. **of the tribe** perhaps does not mean 'of exactly the same tribe as Shylock's, but another Jew.

67. **matched**, found to equal them. This certainly is not a correct estimate of Tubal for, as it turns out, Tubul far from chiming in with Shylock's vindictiveness, plays with him in a way that at times appears to be cruel and excruciating.

68. **Genoa**, evidently messengers have been sent out in all directions on the track of the lost daughter. Tubal was perhaps at the time at Genoa where Shylock had written to him asking him to make a search for her.

73. **Frankfort**, in Germany, one of the greatest centers of Venetian trade in Europe.

The curse, it is difficult to say which he particularly meant. There is a curse denounced on Jews in *Deut.* xxviii. 15, should they fail to keep the Law, "Thy daughters shall be given into another people.... All thy labours shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed always." Shylock at least means that a great calamity would befall his nation, and the greatest that could befall had happened to him in the loss of his diamonds and ducats.

75. **in that**, in that diamond.

76-8. "This passage is always cited to prove that the love of gold had eradicated all human affections from Shylock's heart. This opinion is wrong and exaggerated. ...Reflect for a minute on the profound bitterness of the injury to the wounded old man; his daughter, lost to all propriety or shame, had eloped with a Christian; a thief, and her own father the victim; despising the souvenirs of her mother, and foreswearing her religion—and for the loss of such a creature as this is he to grieve? Never; so low has she fallen in his esteem that, even were she lying dead before him, regret for her loss would be far inferior to that far the money she had stolen. It is the very strongest expression of scorn which his wrath can suggest". (Honigman).

hearsed, lying in her coffin.

why, so, I understand that it is so. The Folio puts a note of interrogation after 'so'—not very forcibly.

81. **nor no etc.**; we know that ill luck has alighted on other shoulders too. At least another has reason to sigh and shed tears. But in the vehemence of his passion Shylock cannot think of any but himself—quite naturally.

87. **cast away**, lost; wrecked.

88. Note how eagerly Shylock exclaims this.

89. Tubal, whose object is to torture Shylock, is quiet.

94. **fourscore**, eighty.

96. **at a sitting**, *i.e.* at one sitting, in gambling or in buying gee-gaws.

98. He must fail to repay the bond.

104. **turquoise**, a precious stone once supposed to possess miraculous virtues, *e.g.*, of fading or brightening according as the health of the wearer increased or grew less.

Leah, his wife long dead.

105. **I would not** etc., this certainly is a very humane touch in the character of Shylock. He values the ring not for its worth or its magical properties but because it is associated in his memory with his first love for his wife. It is rather unjust to suppose that even this shows Shylock's greed for he speaks of something he had got, not of something he had given away. It was a precious souvenir, and as such invaluable. that which [illegible] of [illegible], the memory of anything; a keepsa

for a wilderness, not to speak of one.

107. **fee me,** *i.e.* for me. **bespeak,** engage. **before the bond falls due.** Get the officer ready to arrest Antonio the moment the bond falls due. Shylock begins to "better this instruction."

108. **have,** pluck out. *i.e.* his heart.

110. **merchandise,** profits. There would be no Antonio then to bring down the rate of usance in Venice.

111. **at our synagogue,** in our temple. "In entering his synagogue, Shylock entrusts his hatred to the safeguard of his faith. Henceforward his vengeance assumes consecrated character. ...The expiation of Antonio is but a holocaust offered to the omnipotent Avenger". (Victor Hugo). Here he takes the irrevocable oath of which he speaks in the trial scene.

Scene 2.

Bassanio makes his choice and happens to choose rightly. They are even in the first excitement of fulfilled love, when comes a messenger from Venice with a letter from Antonio saying that all his ventures at sea had miscarried, and that he was a ruined man. This is the central scene of the drama to which the previous ones have been leading us and from which will radiate the subsequent ones carrying us to a happy termination.

Bassanio's arguments:—He would not choose by the mere external show. Appearances are often deceptive. A bad plea in law is sometimes enforced by a gracious voice. A sober look will carry weight for a mountebank who preaches a false religion. There is no vice but has some mark of virtue on its face. The coward assumes the appearance of a Hercules or a Mars though he has got a milk-white heart. Many women assume a beauty which they do not really possess by painting their faces and wearing false heads of crisped golden locks. Then again outward ornaments are the seeming truth which entrap even the wisest, and are thus not only deceptive but dangerous. Therefore would not Bassanio choose either the gaudy gold or the silver, the common drudge between man and man. He chooses the pale and meagre lead, and obtains his suit.

1. It is not right to say that Portia wants Bassanio to tarry because she does not yet feel sure that Bassanio really loves her. She is eager to "stay him from election" because she wants to enjoy his company for a little while before he hazards the result of which might prove fatal to all her hopes.

2. **in choosing wrong,** if you choose wrongly.

4-5. I almost feel sure that I would have you. **but it is not love,** this is only a maidenly denial of the truth.

6. If I really hated you I would not have asked you to tarry. Hate does not give such advice as I am giving you, namely, 'tarry, forbear awhile, pause a day or two'.

in such a quality, to this effect, in this manner.

7-10. In love, a maiden can only think but not speak, maidenly modesty makes her keep her thoughts to herself—hence I cannot speak frankly to you, yet lest you should misunderstand me I ask you to wait, and wait not for 'a day or two' but 'some month or two' before you hazard. This solicitude evidently shows the love she, as a maiden, cannot openly confess.

8. A maiden, in the matter of love, has thoughts but cannot give them vent, cannot speak out all the thoughts that fill her mind.

9. Note the contrast between this and ll. 1-2.

11. Which casket to choose in order to get me.

but etc, but if I do so I perjure myself by breaking the silence I am enjoined to maintain.

12. **So,** forsworn ; a breaker of oaths.

so, if I do not forswear, do not tell you where I am.

13-4. If you do really fail in your choice, I must rest content with the wish—though sinful—that I had perjured myself and directed you to the right election.

Beshrew, a curse upon.

15-8. Your eyes have bewitched me and divided me into two halves, one half of which is already yours and the other half mine, but as I am yours, that half is also yours. I am thus wholly yours.

overlook'd, bewitched ; reference to the supposed influences of malignant and envious eyes. Comp. *Merry Wives* v. 5. 80, "Vile worm, thou wast o'er-lookt even in thy birth."

19. Makes the rightful owner not get that which is really his. Bassanio was the rightful owner of Portia (by the logic given above) and yet he could not get her.

20. **though yours**, though I am wholly yours.

20-1. **Prove** etc, should it prove or turn out to be so that I am *not* yours by an unlucky choice, the blame should rest with fortune, the lottery, and not with me for I have willingly surrendered myself to you already.

22. **peize**, "retard by hanging weights" (Steevens); "to weigh or balance, and hence figuratively, to keep in suspense, to delay" (Henley); "poise" (Wright). Keightley adopts Rowe's correction, 'piece'. I accept Steevens. To 'peize the time' is to make it move slowly as though under the heavy weight of long talk.

23. **eke**, 'draw out in length'. The Folio word is 'ich' which is an archaic form of 'eche', increase.

24. **election**, choice.

25. **the rack** was an instrument of torture to make a criminal confess his guilt. Bassanio means that the suspense tortures him, as a rack did a culprit.

27. As the rack was used to make traitors confess,—if Bassanio be 'upon the rack', there may be treason mixed with his love. Portia wants to know if there be other motives inducing Bassanio to the choice for love, pure and simple, would make him hesitate and satisfied with her company whom he loved.

28-9. I am guilty of extreme self-diffidence, and I am tortured by the thought that I may not enjoy her whom I love.

mistrust, doubt; diffidence. It is as destructive to his peace of mind as treason is to the peace of a country.

fear etc, fear that I may not enjoy or get her whom I love.

30-1. As snow and fire cannot live together, treason and my love cannot agree.

amity and life, harmony and joint existence; or by hendiadys, amiable life or companionship; or they cannot live together far less be friendly towards each other.

33. **enforced**, tortured; under torture. **speak anything**, *i.e.*, even lies.

34. As one guilty of treason might say, 'Tender me a pardon, and I will tell the truth'; Bassanio says 'if I be assured that I shall get your love and thus live, I will freely confess that I love you dearly.'

35. **and live**, an indirect assurance that she loved him.

35-6. 'I confess I love you',—this is the sum-total of all I have got to say.

37-8. How fortunate am I that even my torturer teaches me the words that would deliver me from all tortures,—the words, namely, 'I confess I love.

39. **let,** lead.

40. **I am,** *i.e.*, my portrait.

41. Portia believes that a wise father had made the lottery a test of character, as it really was and it proved in the cases of Morocco and Arragon. See I. 2. 25-31.

44-7. The swan was supposed to sing sweetly before it flung itself into water and perished. In the present case, Portia's eye shall be the channel and her tears the water of the stream in which Bassanio, should he fail, shall end in music, like the swan.

The music, says Boas, is really meant to hide the deep agonies of her heart.

45. **Fading,** dying. **that** etc, to draw out the metaphor fitly; to make it apply fully.

47. **He may win** : if he fails, music is his swan-like end, if he wins, the music is like the flourish of trumpets that announces the ascension of a new sovereign.

49. **flourish,** a set of notes on the trumpet announcing the coronation of a sovereign.

when etc, Bassanio would mount the throne of her heart and she would bow to him like a true, loyal subject.

50-3 Another comparison to illustrate the music should Bassanio win. The music will then be like that which is played in the early morning under the window of a sleeping bridegroom announcing that the morning of his wedding has come.

51. **As are etc,** "an allusion to the custom of playing music under the windows of the bridegroom's bedroom on the morning of his marriage" (Halliwell).

dulcet sounds, sweet strains of music.

53-60. After having appropriately spoken first about Bassanio, Portia goes to speak about herself, I stand as the sacrifice, Bassanio comes to rescue me, Nerissa and others standing around are like the spectators watching the sacrifice.

The allusion in these lines is to the following story : Laomedon, king of Troy, had offended Neptune who thereupon sent a fierce sea-monster to ravage his country. An oracle bade the Trojans sacrifice from time to time a maiden to the monster. It fell by lot that Hesione, the king's only daughter, was to go Just then Hercule appeared and offered to save her if the king agreed to give him in return some famous horses owned by him. He rescued the princess but did not get the horses.

The comparison applies as far as the lottery and the cruel chance are concerned, but not in respect of the fact that Bassanio had come out of love but Hercules undertook the work for some reward, not the love of the maiden.

Shakespeare got the story in Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* xi. 199 et seqq. He might also have seen it in some of the Renaissance pictures.

54. With the same *presence*, dignity of mien, but with more love, for Hercules rescued Hesione not for love but for certain horses. See above.

55. **Alcides,** Hercules. There is a peculiar beauty in comparing Bassanio to the demi-god Hercules.

redeem, save ; rescue.

56. **The virgin tribute,** the maiden Hesione who had been offered up as a tribute to appease the destructive wrath of the sea-monster. **howling,** sorrowful.

57. **stand for** Hesione who was to be scrificed.

58. **The rest,** Nerissa and others. **Dardanian,** Trojan ; from Dardanus, supposed to be the ancestor of the Trojans.

59. **bleared visages,** tearful faces ; with tears in their eyes.

60. **The issue of the exploit,** the result of the choice. Their tearful eyes betoken their apprehension lest Bassanio should fail.

61. **Live thou,** should thou not fail and end in music ; *if* you live. My life depends on your success in the choice.

62. I am much more anxious about the result than you who are actually engaged in the struggle.

the fray, the struggle against ill chance.

60. The song must have been very clearly devised to help Bassanio to his choice. The question asked is, where is fancy bred ? —*fancy*, a passing sentiment of love, not deep and permanent love. Such a passing fitful love Portia did not want from Bassanio. Hence the reply is, it is born in the eye, it is fed with gazing, and it dies in the eyes, it never penetrates as deep as the heart. Let us bid good-bye to mere fancy, let us bury it in its grave, and sound its death-bell. This is a warning to Bassanio that he should not choose by the eye or by mere fancy. Outward shows are often least themselves. This is moreover a plain enough hint to a young quick gallant as Bassanio that the gold and the silver may appeal to the eye or the fancy but he should put himself on his guard against mere deceptive appearances. This, it will be observed, directly becomes the subject of Bassanio cogitations before his choice.

63. **fancy,** "love" (Steevens); rather love of a mere fancy or flimsy attraction for anything that is externally fascinating. Comp. *Twelfth Night* I. 1. 14-15.

64. **Or** or, either or. It is the result of neither a heart-felt emotion nor an intelligent appreciation.

65. The answer is given below. It is born in the eye, nourished there, and dies there too.

67. **engendered,** born, "begot".

68. **fed,** "nourished". **gazing** upon the object of its attraction.

66. As the sight of external beauty gives rise to the sentiment, the removal of it kills it. Fancy is thus born and bred in the eye, and perishes there. It is moreover very short-lived **cradle,** its birth-place; the eyes. It also forms 'the grave' of fancy.

70. Let us say good-bye to mere fancy or eye-love. It is dead, let us bury it with the sound of the knell.

71. **Ding-dong bell,** an echo of the rhythmical sound of the *knell* or death-bell.

72. This comic repetition is not appropriate to a burial, but 'fancy' deserves no better internment.

73. **So.** Dr. Johnson thinks that the first part of the argument had passed in his mind, hence this abrupt beginning; Eccles (rightly) that Bassanio echoes the sentiment and subject of the song. Objects pleasing to fancy, are "least themselves" *i.e.* very unlike what they are in reality. Things are not what they seem.

74 Appearances are deceptive. Men are always deceived with mere external beauty or outward shows.

75-7. In law, however tainted and corrupt a cause may be, a sweet eloquent voice will hide its inward rottenness and make it appear just and far other than what in reality it is. The 'ornament' of the voice gives it a false deceptive appearance.

75. **plea,** cause, defence. Read 'is' after it.

76-7. **But...obscures** etc., *i.e.* that will not hide its real inward corruption; that does not conceal the taint or corruption.

being...voice, sweetened or rendered delicious by the sweet eloquent voice of the pleader. *Season'd,* carries on the metaphor suggested in 'tainted', made sweet by the addition, as it were, of the *spicy* sweetness of a gracious voice.

77-80. As in law, so in religion, if there be a false doctrine some preacher with a sober and reverend appearance will make it appear just and confirm it with texts quoted from holy writings, and thus hide the gross heresy of it under some outward look of plausibility.

78. **damned error,** foul heresy; gross false doctrine. **some sober brow,** some sober clergyman; some grave and reverend-looking divine.

79. **Bless,** sanctify. **approve,** ratify; justify. **a text,** a quotation from the scriptures.

80. **grossness,** gross heresy. Abs. for con.

81-2. **simple,** foolish. A vice however foolish or gross it may be, assumes etc.

his, we expect 'its'. But 'his' was the regular neuter possessive in Shakespeare's time—'its' was an exception.

83-8. This is an instance of a vice assuming a mark of virtue. There are cowards, not a few, whose hearts are frail as sand, who have not the least touch of bravery in their composition, who yet, to impose on their fellow-man, assume the outward signs of valour and cultivate beards upon their chins so as to make them look like Hercules or Mars.

84. **stairs of sand** that betray the feet of those that trust them. So the false hearts of cowards, however courageous they may pretend to look, can never be relied on. In 'stairs' there may also be an allusion to the *mirage* in a desert—a false, deceptive appearance.

85. Beards to make them look like great heroes.

Mars was the classical war-god.

86. **inward searched,** in their real self. **have** etc., are gross cowards. 'A white liver' was in Shakespeare's time supposed to indicate cowardice. So in *Macb.*, 'lily-livered'; milk-livered, white-livered.

87. **but valour's excrement,** the mere outward mark of bravery; 'the beard' spoken of above. *excrement*, outgrowth, excrescence; *e. g.*, the nails, the beards, etc.

88. **To render them redoubted,** to win the credit of being considered indomitable.

beauty, false, artificial beauty; such as is "purchased by the weight".

89. False beauty renders itself beautiful by rouge and paint and false hair that are purchased by the weight. The custom of "beautifying the face with plastering art", was prevalent in Shakespeare's time.

additionally; not essentially inherent

90. These false and adventitious shows and ornaments, purchased by the weight, miraculously transform the ugliest creatures in nature into the most charming.

artificial, conventional

91. Though really the more this factitious beauty is used, the more frivolous appears the wearer of it.

lightest, most frivolous ; most fickle.

92-6. One instance of beauty 'purchased by the weight' is the case of false hairs, curled, long, golden, loosely streaming to the wind on the head of some woman who thus acquires a factitious beauty, living a second life upon a second head, the hairs having been taken originally from a head that is now in the grave.

92. **crisped, curled.** Made to curl by the wig-maker.

93. Which play so wantonly with the wind ; which float loosely upon the wind.

94. **Supposed fairness**, on the head of some woman who thus acquires a factitious or artificial beauty ; whose beauty is only a matter of supposition, borrowed, not real.

95. The custom of wearing periwigs was very common in Shakespeare's time. The false wig is the gift or the legacy derived from another head which is now in the grave. [illegible]

97-8. **Thus...sea**, mere outword beauty leads to deception, as a guileful treacherous sandy shore often plunges a man into a dangerous sea.

guiled, either guileful, deceptive or, "gilded, expressing the glitter of cliffs and rocks, and of the sea's beach, when the sun lies upon them" (Capell).

98-9. **the...beauty**, outward beauty is like the handsome veil that hides the dark face of an Indian woman, or a face that is beautiful and is therefore dangerous. The latter sense would make the comparison agree with the one just preceding it.

Indian beauty, no end of emendations and suggestions have been made on this expression, none very convincing and some very extravagant ; for instance, 'beauty' has been sought to be replaced by "dowdy", "gipsy", "bosom", "visage", "feature", "idol", "beldam". Theobald would read,

> the beauteous scarf
> Veiling an Indian.—beauty's, in a word,

Bailey proposes, "an Indian's *blackness*" ; as though it were impossible to make sense out of the original expression. It may mean either 'the swarthy or dark face of an Indian woman' or 'the seductive dangerous charms of an Indian female face'. Perhaps the former is to be preferred as 'Indian beauty' has always appeared to English minds a contradiction in terms, capable of meaning only a dark and swarthy complexion.

99-101. Briefly, outward beauty is only a show or appearance, a mere dissembling of beauty, meant by cunning people to deceive the wise.

cunning times, crafty, cunning people. 'Times' is, in this sense, used more than once in *Macbeth*.

101. **gaudy** strikes a note of outward ornament.

102. **Hard food for Midas**, Midas, a Phrygian king, had got from the gods the gift of converting whatever he touched into gold. He touched his own food and it became gold. He then prayed to the gods to take back the gift. Meaning, gold is not after all a blessing, it is often a very dangerous thing as it proved in the case of Midas.

103. **thou** etc., referring to 'silver' which in Shakespeare's time was the commonest medium of exchange between men and men.

pale, as the *paleness* of the lead moves him later on, some editors have supposed that Bassanio could not be hard upon 'pale' in connection with silver—hence they suggest 'stale'.

Bassanio rejects the silver because its very 'paleness' gives it an ornamental look ill in harmony with its character of a drudge between man and man.

105. It will be remembered that the golden casket *promised* to give what "many men desire" ; the silver what a man "deserved" ; but the leaden *threatened* a man with risks and "hazards".

106. **Thy paleness.** Warburton was the first to suggest that as Bassanio had already condemned the silver for its 'paleness', he would not commend the same colour in the lead. Hence and also because it gives an effective antithesis to 'eloquence', we should read 'plainness'. This has now been adopted as conclusive.

The plainness of the lead, inspite of the threatening character of its inscription, moves me more than the 'promising' writings and gaudy colours of the gold and the silver. This also lets us into the secret of Bassanio's character—whatever he might have been, there can be no doubt that he was a plain and candid man.

108-10. All other passions that have been agitating me so long—anxious thoughts, despair, fear, jealousy—all these now vanish and leave my heart to love as its own and sole occupant.

108. **fleet** to air, melt into the air, vanish.

109. **As**, to wit, namely. **doubtful**, full of fear or apprehension ; or doubts and anxieties, 'thoughts' in Shakespeare not unfrequently meaning 'anxieties' or 'griefs'.

rash-embraced, *i e.* embraced rashly and not with proper deliberation ; too readily embraced.

110. **shuddering**, making me shudder or tremble.

green-eyed, jaundiced, "seeing all things discoloured and disfigured" (Schmidt). So in *Othello*, *jealousy* is called "the green-eyed monster". The *Jealousy* refers to. her fear lest any other suitor should by chance capture her.

111. **ecstasy**, unrestrained wildness.

112. Shower thy joy on me in moderation, not in excess. Let it not be 'too much' for me.

Dr. Johnson proposed 'rein' and many followed him. It was also the reading of the third Quarto. Both 'rain' and 'rein' give good sense, and mean the same thing in different metaphors.

scant, allay; shorten.

114. **surfeit,** feel to satiety and disgust.

115-6. **counterfeit,** portrait, likeness. Without any of the modern insinuation of fraud.

What...creation, the painter who drew this portrait must have been a demi-god or how could he come so near to creation, *i.e.* to a living created being. No human painter could have made a likeness so lifelike. A god could create, a demi-god could make something very near to creation, a human mortal would necessarily fall far short of it.

117-8. Do those eyes move themselves, or does the motion in my eyes seem to impart a motion to them? **riding,** moving.

118-20. The lips are open and a sweet delicious breath seems to come out of them. Certainly dear friends like those lips should not be parted except by a breath so sweet.

sugar was then a new word, hence excusable.

bar, impediment, namely, her breath.

sunder, sever.

sweet friends, namely, the lips.

120-3. The painter has disposed of her golden hairs in such beautiful braids or knots that the hearts of men are fascinated sooner by them than gnats by cobwebs.

plays the spider, like the spider weaves the hair into nets.

golden, refers to the colour of her hair. **mesh,** net.

Faster, sooner. **gnats** 'are entrapped'.

124. **How...them,** how could he preserve his eyes from being dazzled by hers? how could he preserve his own eyesight to make her eyes?

124-6. **having...unfurnished,** I wonder how he could do the eyes in the portrait; whether, when he had made one of Portia's eyes, both his eyes had not lost their sight so that he could not make the other.

to steal both his, to deprive both his eyes of their power of sight; to blind both his eyes.

leave, so as to make him leave.

itself unfurnished, the one eye in the portrait unfurnished or unprovided with its fellow or companion eye; the other eye undone.

126-9. After all I have said, this portrait falls as far below the real Portia as my praises of this portrait are below what it deserves. As my praises are not a sufficient measure of the praises deserved by this portrait, this portrait is not a sufficiently correct representation of Portia.

The substance of my praise, my praise though full and substantial. **shadow,** portrait.

In, by. **underprizing,** undervaluing.

limp behind, fall below: cannot keep pace with. **the substance,** the real, original, living Portia.

130. **continent,** that which contains; list. **summary,** that which mentions in brief.

131. **by the view,** *i.e.* by mere external looks—(like Morocco and Arragon).

132. May you always choose in this way and be fortunate as now. May chance as fair as the present and choice as true as this, always happen to you.

135. **this** which you get here; namely, the picture of Portia.

136. And consider yourself happy in the fortune that has befallen you.

139. **gentle,** pleasing; not "threatening" like the inscription on the lid. A contrast is intended.

140. I am directed by the note on the scroll to come to you, to give you a kiss and to receive you in exchange. Halliwell points out that 'note' suggests a financial metaphor, *e. g.*, with 'a note of hand', and that it is carried out afterwards in l. 148.

141-6. My condition is like one in a prize-fight who hears the shout of universal applause around him, becomes giddy in spirit, and wonders if those shouts announce victory to him. I am not sure of my victory until you assure me of it.

141. **prize,** race for a prize or a prize-fight; competition.

144. **giddy in spirit,** unable to decide anything for certainty.

145. **be his,** are meant to proclaim his victory.

146. **so,** giddy and wondering if I have really won.

148. *i.e.* unless the note by which I claim you be signed and sealed by you; unless my victory is assured by a word of assent from you.

150-6. Here stand I, a poor simple girl, I would not wish myself better than I am but for you. For your sake, to be a fit companion for one such as you, I wish I were far more fair and far more rich, only to be worthier of your esteem and love.

152. **To wish myself,** *i.e.* to wish that I were.

156. **That**, *i.e.* and that, I wish myself fairer and richer only etc.

account, esteem ; consideration.

157-8. I wish I might exceed all measure, go beyond all calculation, in these respects. **livings**, possessions, fortune, in the ecclesiastical sense.

158-66. I have stuck firm to the Folio reading here. The Quartos read 'sum of something'. My reasons are that the Folio is authentic and that all the qualities Portia goes on to enumerate as belonging to her are negative—*un*lessoned, *un*schooled, *un*practised, *not* yet so old but may learn, *not* so dull but can learn, and, finally, as though by a complete self-effacement, *no* more herself but altogether and in every way dependent on him and to be governed by him. The Quartos have always a respectable following and their chief objection to the Folio seems to be that it robs the passage of the quibble, '*sum* of *something*', which was sometimes too great a temptation for Shakespeare. But does not the Folio reading slightly modified by a dash before 'nothing', give as a compensating substitute by way of a surprise : 'the sum of—nothing'.

but etc. ; taking me as I am, the full sum of me comes up to nothing. **to term in gross**, to name generally, not in details ; to describe in general terms.

160. This is only a modest self-depreciation very much befitting Portia. In the trial scene, she appears far other than an unlessoned, unschooled girl.

unpractised, inexperienced.

161. Note the climax—happy, happier, happiest. Happy that I am not yet too old to learn ; happier that I am not too dull to learn ; happiest that I am now yours.

162. **But**, that she may not.

164. **is**, Collier changes into 'in'—perhaps correctly. But the change is not necessary, because the sense, without it, is not difficult to catch.

165. I resign myself to you—I place myself at your feat, to be directed and governed by you.

166. Another climax. **from**, by.

168. **converted**, changed. **but now**, only a little while ago.

170. **but now**, only at this instant.

171. **this same myself**, *i.e.* this same self of mine (over which I was queen.)

172. **this ring**, another thread is introduced into the story by the introduction of this ring. The last Act will deal with it.

173. The episode of the ring will consist in Bassanio being prevailed upon to part with the ring, and in being made to feel that it was not for nothing a woman was made with a tongue in her mouth.

175. **presage,** foretell ; be a sign of. **ruin,** loss.

175. **vantage,** ground of advantage ; opportunity. **exclaim on,** cry out against.

176-7. I cannot speak, I am overpowered with emotion. His blood alone in happy blushes indicates his joy—his tongue is silent.

178. **powers,** organs ; mental faculties.

179. **spoke,** spoken.

182-4. In the buzzings of the pleased multitude all manner of sentiments and feelings are blended together, rendering them altogether wild and confused, except for an inarticulate expression of joy.

182. **every something :** note the quibble, 'all manner of something blended together produce a wild nothing'; all manner of feelings and sentiments.

blent, blended.

[illegible]

183. Turns to a wild uproar in which no feeling or sentiment, except an inarticulate expression of joy, is discernible. The cumulation of all feelings renders the applause a wild confusion in which there is only one dominant note, that of joy.

184. **Expressed** etc., *i.e.* inarticulately expressed ; uttered in cries, and inwardly felt at the heart ; partly expressed and partly felt.

185. **from hence,** from my body.

186. Then you may boldly and confidently assert that he is dead, for Bassanio shall not survive the loss of this ring.

188. **our wishes** that Portia should get no other suitor but Bassanio.

191. **can wish** for yourselves.

192. Either (1) you can wish no joy (for yourselves) beyond what I wish for you ; or (2) you cannot wish to take away from me any joy that I may seek for myself. The latter interpretation, if accepted, would prepare us for the announcement he is going to make that he has also a mind to "be married too" at the time of his lord and lady's marriage.

193. **your honours :** the customary title of address. Gratiano seems to have profitted by the admonition in II. 2. 166-75.

194. The marriage, as the result of your faith plighted or your contract of faith, towards each other.

186. **you have got me one** by letting me come along with you.

198. **the maid**, Nerissa, not 'servant-maid' but a lady friend, 'a maid in attendance'. Nerissa was in no sense a maid-servant. She was a lady friend of Portia's, well born and bred, though perhaps not so rich. She could thus be a fit match for Gratiano who stood to Bassanio in the same relation as Nerissa to Portia.

199-200. The Folio reads :

> You loved, I loved for intermission,
> No more pertains to me, my lord, than you :

which Staunton interpreted as, 'I loved for fear of intermission, *i. e.* to avoid delay or loss of time'.

The reading in the text is Theobald's and must be accepted. Gratiano means that in the matter of love he brooked as little delay at Bassanio. He was as quick in falling in love as his lord Bassanio ; he profitted by the earliest opportunity that offered itself.

201. **stood**, depended.

201. **as the matter falls**, as it turns out For Nerissa had agreed if only Bassanio had made the right election. So Gratiano's chance also lay on the choice.

202. This is Gratiano's characteristic playful description of his wooing. **sweat** is the obsolete past tense **again**, over and over again.

203. **my roof**, the roof my mouth. The Folio reads 'rough' ; Quarto 1, 'roofe'. Collier suggests 'tongue' ; Halliwell, 'mouth'.

204. **if promise last**, if her promise of giving me her love be yet in force.

206-7. **your fortune** etc., *i.e.* you had the good fortune to get her mistress. **Achieved**, won ; got.

210. **stand**, are. **withal**, with it.

212. Yet I mean good faith or Yes, in faith, I do.

213. **his infidel**, his Jewish lady-love ; Jessica. Theobald pertinently asks why is Jessica left unnoticed for such a long time ? Porita and Bassanio ignore her altogether. It very little mends matter to say that she herself avoided any attention being paid to her. In such a company as the present, a shy new-comer would all the more attract attention. May it be that Lorenzo immediately after coming in intimates to Bassanio and Gratiano by signs that no notice should be taken of her until they have well established themselves in the house and in the confidence of Portia and her maid ?

214. **Salerio**. Many editors have rejected this name, objecting to the introduction of a new old friend so late in the play. But the Quartos and the Folios have it and we retain it.

216-7. **the youth of my interest here**, my newly-acquired right in Portia's house ; my just-obtained position.

Have power, give me the right ; justify me.

218. **very,** *i.e.* very true. This is the old and now obsolete use of the word.

The Bible has, "very and eternal God" ; "very God."

221. **entirely,** most heartily.

223. The question might naturally arise how could Lorenzo and Jessica have chosen to resort to Belmont before they could know that Bassanio had been successful there. This is skilfully answered here.

225. **past all saying nay,** beyond my power of denying him ; It was impossible for me to say 'nay' to him.

227. **reason** which he does not state anywhere. He might presume that Lorenzo could be of help to Antonio in his difficulty, especially because Lorenzo had with him some money and the Jew's daughter who, if necessary, might be asked to intercede with the father.

228. **commends him,** sends you his greetings.

ope, open.

229. **doth,** fares ; how is he.

230-1. He is ill in mind, and unless he be comforted and supported by fortitude in this his great misfortune, he cannot be well in mind. Physically, he is all right.

232. **his estate,** his present condition ; how he stands.

233. **you stranger** is certainly Jessica.

235. **royal.** Warburton explains the word from the peculiar custom prevailing at Venice in the beginning of the 13th century of allowing her merchants to occupy any of the islands in the Archipelago, setting up sovereign rights there, on condition only of doing homage to the republic for their several principalities. Hunter says that 'a 'royal merchant' was one who transacted business for a sovereign. 'Royal' may have no special significance, but only mean what we call 'a merchant prince' these days. Comp. also, 'the railway king.'

237. "The meaning is, Antonio, with his *argosies*, is not the successful Jason : we are the persons who have won the fleece" (Douce). For the allusion, see on I. 1. 170 ff.

238. **the fleece,** there may be a pun on 'fleece' and 'fleets' : or the wealth. I wish that you, and not Shylock, had got the wealth that he has lost ; or I wish that his wealth had not all gone down to the bottom of the sea but that you had rescued some part of it.

239. **shrewd,** evil ; unpleasant. The original sense is, "malicious, wicked ; cunning, acute" (Skeat).

240. Makes his cheeks pale.

241. **turn,** affect. **constitution,** mind ; temper.

242. **constant,** steady, firm ; self-possessed.

243 **With leave,** I beg your permission to interrupt you : I must have a share in this trouble with you. I am half of yours, and have a claim to half of the news.

freely, unconditionally ; unreservedly.

anything, good or bad.

248. **blotted,** were written on.

250. **all etc,** I have no wealth at all, my only title to respect is that I am a gentleman.

253-4. When I asked you to rate me as a gentleman without any wealth, I was yet a braggart and did not tell you that I had not only no wealth but that I was also heavily in debt.

at nothing, as worth nothing ; as having no wealth.

a braggart, a vain boaster.

255. **was,** amounted to. **state,** property ; wealth.

256. **worse than nothing** because actually over head and ears in debt.

257. **engaged myself to,** ran into a debt of honour with ; put myself under an obligation to.

258. Caused my friend to engage himself for my sake. **mere,** unqualified, absolute.

260. Read 'the paper *is* as the body," supplying *is* from the preceding line.

261. **gaping,** yawning.

262. **Issuing,** pouring forth. Every word in the letter is steeped in the life-blood of the friend. Bassanio almost sees the great havoc that Shylock would now have a chance of making on the body of his friend.

263. **hit,** a success.

264. **Mexico,** Elze points out that this is English, not Venetian, for the Venetians had never any trade with America.

265. **Barbary,** northern part of Africa including Morocco, Algeria, Tunis, Tripoli, Barca, and Fezzan.

267. **merchant-marring,** fatal to merchants or merchantmen.

Not one. This universality of loss injures the probability of the story. But it is necessary for the purposes of the drama.

269 **present,** ready. **discharge,** pay off.

270. **He,** the Jew. **would not take it** on the pretence that the stipulated date had expired, and Antonio must pay the penalty.

271. **that did...man,** that looked like a man.

272. **keen and greedy,** keenly bent upon. **confound,** destroy, a common enough sense in old writers. Comp. *Par. Lost* ii. 382, "to *confound* the race of mankind."

273. **plies,** importunes.

274. **impeach the freedom,** calls in question, denies, that Venice gives to aliens equal rights with her citizens. The particular right here referred to is that of aliens and citizens having equal claim to justice. Comp. iv, 1., "if you deny me, let the danger light upon your charter and your city's freedom."

275. **magnificoes,** chief men of Venice ; grandees.

276. **port,** position ; importance. **persuaded,** argued. It has not the modern idea of convincing and winning over.

277. **envious,** malicious. **plea of,** demand for.

278. **forfeiture** of bond ; a declaration that the day has expired and the penalty stipulated for in the 'bond', must now be paid.

279. Those who say that Jessica shrinks back from the company out of modesty, must be startled to find that the first time she speaks, she rails against a father whom she has so liberally relieved of his wealth.

285. Portia might have taken her cue from this.

289. **best-conditioned,** having the kindliest disposition ; most amiable-tempered. **unwearied,** supply the superlative idea, *e.g.*, in some such word as 'most', from 'best'.

291. **The ancient Roman honour,** nothing was dearer to an old Roman than 'honour'. It is this which wins over one of the greatest of the Romans, Brutus, to undertake the assassination of Caesar. And it is with this that Antony taunts him—'Brutus is an honourable man.' Comp. the true Roman sentiment of honour in *Julius Cæsar I. 2. 85-87* :

> If it be ought toward the general good,
> Set honour in one eye and death i' the other,
> And I will look on both indifferently.

292. **draws breath,** lives. **any,** *i.e.*, *in* any *man.*

294. Bassanio does not know Antonio had run into many debts already.

295. **deface,** cancel. Perhaps by writing 'Paid' or some such word over the face of it.

297. **of this description,** so good and kind.

299. **call me wife,** marry me : let our nuptials be solemnized.

302. **unquiet soul,** troubled mind.

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303. Evidently she had not heard Jessica declaring that the Jew would not take even twenty times the bond.

307. **hence**, the verb of motion is implied in the word.

308. **cheer**, countenance. Be not so dejected.

309 **dear bought**, refers evidently to the anxiety and distress of mind she had suffered all the while her fate was in suspense. May refer also to the hazard Antonio had run for Bassanio, without which she could hardly have him.

311. On Shakespeare's use of 'prose', see App.

312. **my estate is very low**, my condition is very much degraded. He would not tell his friend that he was in jail.

313-4. **you and I**, we should read 'you and me'.

all debts etc, as the punctuation stands the forgiving by Antonio of all Bassanio's debts to him would seem to depend upon one last act of friendship on the part of the latter, namely, his going over to see Antonio before his death. But this is not very consistent with the generosity and tenderness of Antonio's character. Perhaps we may put a full stop after 'I', and a note of admiration after 'death.'

315. **love** for me.

317. **dispatch**, either expedite or put an end to.

321-2. I shall have no rest, no sleep.

Scene 3.

Antonio has prevailed upon his Jailer to take him out that he may see Shylock and beg him to relent. Shylock is inexorable and will have nothing but his bond.

This is the scene of Shylock's triumph over Antonio. The dramatic necessity for it lies in its showing that the action upon the bond has commenced. It prepares us for the great Trial scene in Act iv. 1.

2. **lends**, this the Folio reading altered by many into 'lent'. But the present tense has a violent sneer in it, as Antonio has now nothing to lend.

6. See I. 3. 99.

9. **naughty**, bad, wicked. Shylock chides the Jailer for allowing Antonio to come for a short time outside the walls of the prison. In such a case an action for 'escape', might lie.

fond, indulgent ; "weakly compassionate" (Knight).

14. **soft**, tender-hearted. **dull-eyed**, dejected-looking.

fool. "By the way in which the Jew uses this term here twice in this short scene, and each time in conjunction with benevolence,—Shakespeare well marks Shylock's characteristic idea, that kindness, compassion, and good feeling are synonymous with folly" (Cowden-Clarke.)

15. 'To shake the head' at first as a sign that I would not relent and then to relent and sigh.

16. **Christian.** Shylock's enmity to Christians is national and deep-rooted.

18. **impenetrable cur**, merciless dog.

19. **kept**, dwelt ; lived.

21. **reason** which he goes on to mention. I saved many a debtor (by giving them money gratis) whom he had in his wicked grasp.

22. **his forfeitures**, penalties due to him. *i.e.* Many who failed to keep their day, and were thus liable to penalty.

23. **made moan**, complained ; represented their sad case to.

25. **to hold good.** The penalty of a pound of flesh cut from a man's heart, would be an immoral condition not allowed by modern jurisprudence. But perhaps there was nothing bad in it in Venice. See in *Intro*, 'the law in the Trial scene'.

26. This is an excellent trait in Antonio—undoubtedly the most honourable—that he does not like the Duke to violate the law for his sake. He knows that the prosperity of Venice lies on her equal law for citizens and aliens. Should anything interfere with the even courses of justice, the good name of Venice would suffer.

27-8. This is the Folio reading. Many and various emendations have been proposed. I prefer the reading in the Text.

The difficulty lies in explaining the word 'commodity' and in deciding with which of the two things named above, 'commodity' and 'law', 'if it we denied' has to be taken. I think the difficulty is apparent, not real. 'Commodity'—privilege ; *here* the particular privilege of getting an equal law and equal justice with the citizens. If this be denied to them, as it might be if the Duke were to wrest the law to thwart Shylock, strangers will lose confidence in Venetian justice and cease to trade with the Republic with this consequence that the prosperity of it would be gone. Commodity or rather, by a common Latinism, the denial of it, implied in 'if it be denied', will impeach, *i.e.*, cause strangers to impeach, etc. *impeach*; doubt, call in question.

All editors have ranged themselves under either Malone or Capell. Malone took '*it*' to refer to 'commodity' and explained thus, 'that is, the denial of those rights to strangers which render their abode at Venice so commodious and agreeable to them, would much impeach the justice of the state. The consequence would be, that strangers would not reside or carry on traffic here ; and the wealth and strength of the state would be diminished'.

Capell read thus :

> The Duke cannot deny the course of law,
> For the commodity that strangers have
> With us in Venice : if it be denied,
> 'T will much impeach the justice of the state.

Capell takes *it* to refer to 'course of law', and objects to the older reading because it makes 'commodity' the nominative to 'impeach', which the sense will not justify. The meaning then is, 'the Duke cannot deny the law to take its course,—why not ? *for*, on account of, the *commodity*, the trade, strangers carry with us. If he does so, the denial would impeach etc.

consisteth, singular either because 'trade and profit' make a hendiadys, profitable trade, or by a common practice in Shakespeare of making the verb agree with the nearer of two nouns coupled by 'and.'

32. **bated**, reduced, emaciated.

his debt, *i.e.*, a debt contracted for his benefit or for his sake. **I care not** how I perish.

Scene 4.

True to the general characteristic of all Shakespeare's women Portia has a natural alacrity of mind which is deeply stimulated by the stress of difficulty. She resolves, and all in a trice, to dress herself like a man and to be in at the trial to help her husband and his 'bosom lover'. She resolves also to leave her house and to keep the matter entirely secret, under the common feminine pretence of shutting herself up from the public in the absence of her husband. She pretends she would retire to a nunnery. Perhaps the quibble by which she would save her husband's friend, also flashed through her mind at this very instant.

1. I do not mean to flatter you though I say so in your presence.

2. **conceit**, conception.

3-4. **god-like amity**, divine friendship such as exists between Antonio and Bassanio.

which etc ; that you conceive friendship to be divinely instituted appears in your thus patiently bearing the absence of your husband in the cause of friendship or for the sake of his friendship for Antonio. You reconcile yourself to this absence on the ground that the claims of friendship must be respected.

5. *i.e.* the honourableness of the man to whom etc.

6. Read ' to ' before ' How '.

7. Antonio's three claims to reverence, (1) his character, (2) his truth and gentlemanliness, and (3) his dear love for Bassanio. **lover** in Shakespeare's time meant persons of the same sex esteeming each other.

8-9. You would be prouder of helping him than any ordinary act of charity which you are accustomed to do might give you reason to be. This extraordinary occasion would give you an extraordinary ground of pride.

customary county, ordinary benevolence; common acts of charity you are always in the habit of doing.

enforce you to be.

11. The double negative makes a strong affirmative.

11-5. Men that associate and spend the time together, who love each other equally, must needs have a similarity in appearance, manners and spirit. Hence Antonio and Bassanio must be of a piece, and therefore Antonio must be an honourable man since Bassanio is so.

12. **converse**, associate. This was the common meaning of the word in Elizabethan English.

waste, *not* idle away, but spend or consume in enjoyment.

13. **equal**, the Folio reads 'egal' which "was commonly used for *equal* in Shakespeare's time."

Whose etc., who love each other equally.

14. **a like proportion**, a close similarity.

15. **lineaments**, features. Warburton objected to the comma after the word because, as he supposed, friendship however dear could not make two faces similar. Steevens makes the sense thus, 'corresponding proportions of body and mind are necessary for those who spend their time together'.

19. Portia had already in III. 2. said, "you shall have gold to pay the petty debt twenty times over". She is evidently referring to this offer. It would be nothing if the life of Antonio could be saved thereby.

20. **the semblance of my soul**, *i.e.* Antonio; one who so closely resembles Bassamio who is my soul.

21. **misery**; reading of Quarto 1. The Folio reads 'cruelty'. 'Misery' refers to his bankruptcy; 'cruelty' to Shylock's grip on him.

22. This is very much like self-praise.

25. **husbandry**. care; "stewardship." **manage**, management.

27. This is only a pretext under which she hides the true cause of her sudden departure from home which she reveals to Nerissa.

toward heaven, in the name of God. They would retire to a nunnery.

28. **contemplation,** divine meditation.

30. **her husband,** Gratiano.

31. **monastery,** evidently a nunnery, a convent for nuns. Th. Elze maintains that there was a Benedictine convent not far from Belmont.

33. **to deny this imposition,** to say me nay; to refuse to undertake this duty which I impose on you.

34. **some necessity,** that of going to save the life of her husband's friend. She would not disclose the plan to him.

36. **fair commands.** Lorenzo does not mean to distinguish her commands into *fair*, proper, and *unfair*, improper; but that he would obey her knowing that she could command nothing but what was fair and honourable.

38. **acknowledge** as in authority, in our absence.

42. **all heart's content,** the heartiest cheer; all happiness of heart.

44. **back,** in return.

46. **thee,** addressed to a servant. See appendix for Shakespeare's use of *thou* and *you*.

honest-true, Abbott says that in such combinations of adjectives, not unfrequent in Elizabethan English, the first must be regarded as an adverb.

48-9. Do use all the haste a man may command to go to Padua.

Padua, the Folio writes 'Mantua'. Evidently a mistake; for Bellario appeas to have lived at Padua. Comp. "A messenger, with letters from the Doctor; new come from *Padua*": also, "came you from *Padua*, from Bellario"; and again, "It comes from *Padua*, from Bellario "Besides' *Padua*, not *Mantua*, is the place of education for the Civil Law in Italy" (Theobald).

render, deliver.

50. **cousin,** formerly used to designate any kinsman except of the first degree.

51. **notes,** instructions relating to Antonio's case. **garments,** lawyer's cap and gown.

52. **imagined speed,** "with celerity like that of imagination" (Steevens); "imaginable speed" (Eccles). Both are possible.

53. **the tranect,** "a ferry or passage boat" (Capell). From *tranare*, to swim or pass over. Many editors consider the word to be a misprint for *traject*, corresponding with *traghetto*, meaning "a

ferry, a passage, from shore to shore'. But there is no reason to make a supposition like this when the text word gives good sense.

The reference to 'the common ferry' has been held to be one of the proofs that Shakespere must have personally visited Italy. It is evident that he had a particular ferry in mind. "There is 'a common ferry' at two places, Fusina and Mestre. The Fusina ferry would be the one if Portia lived in perhaps the most striking situation, under the Euganean hills. But the Mestre ferry is the most convenient medium between Padua aud Venice...It is eighteen English miles from Padua and five from Venice." Shakespeare might have been thinking of this latter ferry.

54. **trades,** carries on traffic ; is the vehicle of communication·

56. **convenient,** suitable to the urgent nature of the business.

60. **habit,** dress.

61. **are accomplished** etc., possess manly characteristics which we really lack.

62. **hold thee any wager,** propose any bet ; am prepared to lose anything.

63. **accoutred,** drest ; equipped. Q 1. has "apparreld" which may have been the correct word. Shakespeare seems to have been fond of disguising his females as males. Comp, Rosalind, Celia, Viola, Imogen.

64. **dagger** which is a part of a man's equipment. **braver grace,** finer, smarter, appearance.

66-7. **And speak...voice ;** I will adopt a cracked voice like that of one who is passing from boyhood to manhood. At that intermediate stage the voice is naturally broken or reedy. Comp. *Haml.* II. 2, "Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring."

change, transition.

67-8. **turn...stride,** turn my naturally feminine and delicate manner of walking into a striding gait proper to a man.

mincing, walking with affected nicety.

manly, characteristic of a man.

frays, quarrels ; affrays.

69. **bragging,** swaggering. **quaint,** artful, clever. A sample of the 'lies' is given below.

70. This is an instance of a 'bragging' common with young men.

72. **do withal,** help it ; lit. do (anything) *with it.* Some commentators believe that Portia is using the phrase rather indelicately.

for all that, inspite of all I had done to these suitors. Portia" lie was certainly a quaint one for we have got to substitute 'princess in place of 'ladies,' and the description would be true of her.

74. **puny**, petty. **twenty** is of course indefinite.

75-6. **That**, so that.

I have etc., I must have left school more than a year ago so that I could have gone through all these adventures.

77. **raw** boyish. **Jacks**, "in our author's time, a term of contempt" (Malone); a silly, foolish fellow. So in *Much Ado V. 1. 91.*, "Boys, apes, braggarts, Jacks, milksops."

79. **all**, completely; in full.

80. **coach**; though Halliwell says that "in Venice there were no coaches" and asks the reader to believe that Shakespeare might have been thinking of the London of his own day, Th. Elze has proved that coaches were in existence there as early as 1562.

81. **the park gate**. By these circumstantial details Shakespeare secures an air of probability about the story.

82. **twenty miles**. Portia might have been speaking at random but it is remarkably coincident that the distance between Venice and the locality where Belmont stood, was exactly twenty miles. This is also a bit of 'local colour.'

measure, cover; account for.

Scene 5.

This scene is meant only to let Portia 'measure' the distance between Belmont and Venice. It has little other dramatic necessity.

It is characteristic with Shakespeare to put serious and light scenes side by side. This is an instance.

2. **laid**, visited. This is the Biblical dispensation.

3. **I fear you**, ie., *for* you: I have fear on your account. For the sins of your father are to be 'laid' on you.

4. **agitation**, cogitation. Launcelot's malapropism.

be of good cheer, another blunder for she could certainly not be of good cheer to learn that she was damned.

5. **one hope**, namely, if you disown your father, and say you are not Shylock's daughter: but that would be 'a base hope' because she would thereby admit that she was a bastard, and could not escape the penalty since the sins of her Jewess mother would still be on her.

14-15. **Scylla** and **Charybdis** names of a rock and a whirlpool respectively, on either side of the narrow straits of Messina. It is a common phrase meaning 'to fall into one danger in trying to avoid another.'

gone, damned.

17. On the hypothesis that salvation is only for the Christians. Comp. *1 Cor. vii., 14*, "the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband.'

20. **enow** in number. Archaic plural of 'enough.'

one by another, side by side.

21. This may be taken as a key-note to the Trial Scene. It certainly expresses Shakespeare's own personal disapproval of the religious conversion of Shylock in the next scene. With Shakespeare, religion consists not in dogmas but in the spirit.

22. **hogs**, pork. In I. 3. 30 Shylock abuses the christians as pork-eaters.

23. **a rasher**, a thin slice of broiled bacon. A "rasher the coals" was a favourite article of food in Shakespeare's time. The 'rasher' is put 'on the coals' to be roasted.

for money, *i.e.*, for any amount of money. The demand will far exceed the supply.

26. Like a young and newly-married husband, Lorenzo does not like that Launcelot and Jessica should be talking together in secret.

28. **are out**, are quarrelling; have fallen out. We are not even talking in a friendly spirit. You need not thus be 'jealous.'

flatly, plainly. **no mercy** but damnation.

30. **no good** etc., because you help to make living dearer for the Christians.

32-3. I think in these days wits must be silent and fools alone talk. Wit will be most graceful if it be silent; and talking most praiseworthy only in fools.

only but parrots, *i.e.*, except in *parrots*, fools, like Launcelot, only.

34. **them**, the servants. Lorenzo means, ask the servants to get dinner ready. Launcelot wilfully misunderstands him, and replies, They are all hungry and thus ready for dinner. The little word 'for' gives him his opportunity.

35. **stomachs**, appetite; hunger.

36. **what a wit-snapper**, how quick in witty retorts.

38. **cover**: this is the cue for another witty sally—*cover*, in the sense of putting the cloth on the dining-table, the sense in which Launcelot wants Lorenzo to use it and Lorenzo uses it; and *cover*, in the sense of putting on the head, the sense in which Launcelot veering round springs a retort on Lorenzo.

40. **quarrelling with occasion**, either "taking every opportunity to make perverse replies" (Wright); or "at odds with the

the matter in question, turning it into ridicule without reason" (Schmidt).

43. Lorenzo is a little vexed with Launcelot's foolery.

46 ff. Launcelot makes a final attempt at humour by jumbling up Lorenzo's directions into a muddle.

48. for, as for.

48. **humours and conceits,** whims and fancies. That is, come in to dinner when you please.

50. What a wonderful power of discrimination this man possesses, how beautifully has he misapplied his words! This of course is ironical. The 'ill-suiting' of words does not show any discrimination at all. **discretion,** discrimination. **suited,** misapplied, *e. g.*, 'serve in' to 'the table' and 'cover' to 'the meat.'

52. **army,** garrison.

53-5 I know of many men who are higher posted in society but are really fools like him, who have a large stock of good words and like him misapply them to the subject for the sake of a fantastic quibble.

53. **A many fools,** the *a* was frequently inserted before numeral adjectives to signify that the objects enumerated are to be taken collectively as one. Comp. "*This* nineteen *years*"; "*This* many *summers*";—both occurring in Shakespeare. **stand,** in society.

54. **garnished,** having in their memory an army of good words; furnished with a large stock of them, as Launcelot was.

for etc, to indulge in a fantastic expression will pay no head to the matter in hand; utterly disregard the meaning just to have the pleasure of a queer expression.

a tricksy word, the trick of a fantastic expression; a quibble.

55. **defy,** contemptuously disregard; pay no heed to. **the matter,** the plain meaning of a subject in hand. They don't care whether or not the queer expression fetched from their armoury of good words suits the matter.

cheer'st, farest. Schmidt notes that this is the only instance in Shakespeare of *cheer* used intrasitively.

58. **Past all expressing,** more than I can well express. **meet,** proper.

59. Perhaps Bassanio's past life had not been very upright. We have no reason to believe the contrary.

60. **in,** i. e. in the person of, in the shape of.

62. **mean it,** this is the reading of the 1st Quarto, needlessly changed by the Folio into: 'meane it, it is reason.'

The difficulty lies in determining the antecedent of *it.* Perhaps *it* refers to 'live an upright life.' If he does not mean to live an upright life on the earth, he can never go to heaven, in a double sense: (1) he can never enjoy long the blessing of such a good wife, and (2) he can only qualify himself for the happiness of the next world by a life of sinlessness in this.

Some change *mean* to 'merit' and take *it* to refer to 'blessing',—if on earth he does not deserve a blessing by leading an upright life.

Another interpretation is to take *it* to refer to 'blessing' and *mean* in the sense in which it occurs in 'golden mean'—if he does not observe the mean in his blessings, if he does not restrain himself in the enjoyment of his blessings, if he does not enjoy his blessings moderately.

64-8. Should there be a competition among the gods in heaven, and two earthly women—Portia and another—be chosen as the wager, something should be added to that other woman in order that the wager may be a fair one, since Portia has not her equal on the earth.

65. **lay**, stake ; accept two women of the earth as the wager or bet.

67. **Pawned**, pledged, staked. **other** woman.

68. **fellow**, equal. Has no woman equal to her in person and merit.

68-69. As she is the paragon of a woman, I am the nonpariel of a husband. **of**, in.

71. **anon**, I will ask you your opinion presently but not now.

72. **while** etc ; (1) while as yet a loaded stomach does not knock all speech out of me. (2) while I have the inclination to praise you, in my present mood.

74. **other things**, other dishes. These will serve as a sauce to enable me to digest your praises, whatever these may be, even though your praise should amount to dispraise by overleaping the bounds of modesty or falling short of what is due.

75. **set you forth**, praise you ; or perhaps ambiguously, show you up.

ACT IV.

Scene I.

This is the great scene to which the rest have been leading us. In the Grand Court of Justice, the Duke and the Senators and the Magnificoes of state, the merchants from the Rialto, the friends of Antonio and Bassanio, are assembled in awful expectation of what course the stony adversary would choose to adopt. Antonio comes perilously near losing his life when it is saved by a legal quibble as true in godlike amity as unworthy in a court of law.

The law in the trial scene has been discussed in the Intro. The presence of the Doge as the President, and of the Senators as Judges, is an anachronism. The Doge presided neither over the Supreme Court for Civil Causes nor over the one great Supreme Court for criminal actions. And in place of the senators, there were forty Judges in each court. But if at the sacrifice of truth Shakespeare has secured a splendid dramatic and scenic effect by bringing in the whole majesty of Venice at a trial of such unusual and unprecedented character.

It must be noticed that with very few exceptions Shakespeare's dramas lead up to a scene of the utmost tragic interest whence the play developes either as a comedy or as a tragedy. So that it is difficult to say at the beginning whether a play would conclude in tears or in laughter. This is the scene of tragic concentration in *The Merchant of Venice* after which it diverges into the realm of pure and genial comedy.

2. This is the customary answer when a case is called in court.

3. **answer,** face.

3. **uncapable,** Shakespeare more often writes '*incapable*' than '*uncapable*.'

6. **From,** of. **dram,** drop ; any very minute quantity.

7. **qualify,** soften, moderate, temper.

'Your grace' was not the usual address of the Venetian Doge-Shakespeare is transplanting a custom of his own country there.

10. **envy,** a much stronger word in Shakespeare's time than now, meaning 'hatred', 'malice.'

11. I patiently prepare myself to bear his fierceness.

12. **a quietness of spirit,** calm fortitude.

13. **tyranny and rage,** perhaps a hendiadys=cruel violence.

very, utmost.

his, i. e. his *spirit*.

18-21. We all believe that thou wilt keep this appearance of cruelty up to the time the court grants thee thy claim in full, and that after that thou wilt relent and show that thou canst really be more merciful than thou couldst pretend to be cruel.

18. **fashion,** way : appearance. Contrasted with 'act' below.

19. **the last hour of act,** the termination of this trial ; until thy claims are granted in full.

20. **remorse,** pity ; commiseration. A sense obsolete now, the modern sense being self-compunction.

21. Than thy *apparent cruelty*, *i.e.* this look of cruelty on thy part, is strange. **strange**, unexpected.

22. **where**, whereas. *i.e.*, Though thou art now bent upon exacting the penalty.

24-6. Thou wilt not only remit the penalty of a pound of flesh but even, touched with pity, give up a portion out of the principal.

24. **loose the forfeiture**, remit the penalty; cease insisting on the penalty of the pound of flesh. Some commentators explain *loose* as meaning 'release', making 'loose' correlative of 'bind'.

26. **a moiety**, a portion. Generally 'a third' in Shakespeare.

27. Looking with pity; casting looks of pity; in consideration of his losses.

28. That have so overwhelmed him lately.

29-33. So great are the losses that are huddled on him that they may crush even a royal merchant and make the hardest-hearted of men, *e.g.*, the Turks and the Tartars who never know pity, pity him.

29. **a royal merchant**, see on III. 2. 235.

30. Enforce pity for his wretched condition. **pluck**, extort. **commiseration**, pity.

31. From bosoms of brass and hearts of flint, *i.e.* from the hardest-hearted, most feelingless, of men.

32-3. Illustrations of l. 31. Turks and Tartars were proverbially savage and cruel-hearted.

33. **To offices** etc., to do kind and gentle acts.

34. **a gentle answer** and not such an one as might be expected from stubborn Turks and flinty Tartars. Wright supposes that there is a pun on 'Gentile'—doubtful.

35. **possess'd**, informed; told.

37. **the due and forfeit**, hendiadys for 'the forfeit which is due'; the penalty which has become due on the forfeiture of the bond.

39. Let Venice lose her freedom and forfeit the charter which has secured it to her. The threat could have little application to Venice as her freedom was secured by no charter, she being a free republic. Shakespeare applied to Venice what was suitable to a city of his own country. However, be that as it may, this is the strongest claim that Shylock has upon the Doge for justice.

41. **A weight of carrion flesh**, a pound of dead and rotten flesh.

43. **humour**, fancy, whim. Some commentators fail to see how Shylock refusing to answer could undertake to answer in the same breath and explain it in nineteen long lines. Dr. Johnson has solved the riddle. "The Jew being asked a question which the law

does not require him to answer, stands upon his right and refuses; but afterwards gratifies his own malignity by such answers as he knows will aggravate the pain of the enquirer".

44-6. This is an illustration of his 'humour'.

baned, poisoned.

are you etc., does that answer satisfy you?

47. **a gaping pig** 'a roaring pig' (Steevens); 'a pig prepared for the table' (Malone); 'a squeaking pig' (Knight). Shylock certainly refers to a living animal, a squealing pig.

49. **the bagpipe** of which Shylock himself was awfully afraid. See ii. 5. 29. **sings in the nose**, makes a squeaking, squealing noise.

50. **contain**, restrain. For 'themselves' the Folio reads 'their urine'; puts a full stop after 'affection' and has 'Masters' instead of 'Mistress.' The change was made by Thirlby and has been adopted by most of the editors.

50-2. **for affection...loathes**; these lines have caused no end of troubles to the editors. But the sense is not difficult to catch if only we bear in mind a distinction between *affection* and *passion* which Shylock has already made in iii. 1. 48. *Affection* refers to an external object that raises either sympathy or antipathy; *passion* is the inward impulse generally. Affection is the mistress of passion, because it is our liking or disliking for an external object that rouses passion for it in the mind; affection sways *it*, passion, to the mood of what *it*, affection, likes or loathes, *i.e.* to say, affection according as it likes a thing or loathes it, makes our passion act. In simple English, we act towards a thing according as we have sympathy or antipathy for it, we treat it well if we have sympathy for it, we treat it ill if we have antipathy for it. Shylock would act badly towards Antonio because he had a settled antipathy for him.

your answer to the question suggested in ll. 40-2.

53. **firm**, sure, good. There is no 'reason' in such matters—our sympathies and antipathies do not wait on reason but are instinctive.

54. **he**, a man. **abide**, endure.

55. **woollen**, the bladder of the instrument having a case of wool. Dr Johnson suggested 'wooden'; other emendations are 'wauling', 'swollen', etc.

55-7. A man cannot render a good reason why he likes or dislikes a particular thing; and thus, while he is himself offended by certain things, makes himself liable to the disgrace of offending others by seeming to withhold reasons when really he has no reason to offer.

55. **of force**, perforce; since he has no reason to offer.

57. As arises out of his offending others from whom he appears to be withholding his reasons.

Thus, Shylock means, I may appear to be offending you because I am offering no reason why I should prefer a pound of flesh. I have really no reason to offer. All that I can say is that I have an instinctive settled antipathy for Antonio.

58. Double negatives for emphasis.

59. **lodged**, settled ; living in my heart. **certain**, fixed.

61. **A losing suit**, a suit that entails a great loss of money on my part. A pound of flesh might satisfy his antipathy but would not compensate him for the loss of his money.

63. **To**, able to. **current**, flow ; course it is going to adopt.

65. As Shylock meditated killing Antonio.

67. Resentment for injury received does not amount at once to a settled hatred (such as may impel a man to kill the injurer). Bassanio seems to forget that Shylock's hatred was the result of resentment brooding long and over injury received 'many a time and oft'. An offence is certainly not a hate at first, but may amount to it if it be repeated over and over again.

68. That was Shylock's 'reason'—Antonio must not again sting him.

69. **think you** etc. ; remember that you are arguing with the Jew from whom you cannot expect to get a dram of mercy.

question, converse, argue.

71. And bid the sea not come up so high. Every student knows the story of Cnut.

main flood, open sea. **bate**, abate:

72. **use question**, argue.

73. This is the reading of Q. 1. The Folio omits 'Why...made.' **bleat**, cry piteously. **the lamb** it has made a victim of.

75. **To wag**, to shake. **no noise**, we must read '*any* noise' unless we suppose that this is an instance of the Elizabethan double negative making an emphatic negative.

76. **fretted**, agitated. All the Quartos have 'fretten'.

81. Briefly and promptly befitting the dignity of the court. **plain conveniency**, befitting despatch ; suitable promptitude.

86. **draw**, take. Perhaps take from the bag that Bassanio held out to him. We speak of 'drawing' from a bank.

87. This is the Duke's second appeal to Shylock to soften his rigourism. We shall see at the end that rendering no mercy Shylock receives none.

88. Shylock does not understand how in a legal trial there can be any question of mercy—it is purely a matter of justice and he insists

on it. If he does no legal wrong to anybody, he need fear no legal wrong to be done to him.

90. **which**, when we should expect *whom*, more forcibly draws out the idea of cruel treatment like beasts of burden.

91. **in object** etc., *i.e.* in low and menial duties.

92. Your argument is, you have 'a legal right' to use them so because you paid a price for them. There is no question of 'mercy' in this—and I cannot ask you to treat them as you treat your friends and relatives.

95-6. Give them such food as you yourself eat. Where in such cases is your doctrine of mercy?

seasoned, gratified. **such viands**, such food as you eat yourself. **dearly bought**, *i.e.* with three thousand ducats in cash and all the ill treatment he had received from Antonio.

101. It will be said that Venice has no power to enforce its own laws and decrees. And foreigners will trust you no more.

102. **stand for**, insist upon.

Shylock, it will be seen, has judgment at the end and with a vengeance.

103. **upon**, relying upon; by virtue of; in accordance with.

104. It would seem to be a strange coincidence that both the Duke and Portia should be consulting the same jurist on the same question. Dr. Johnson was inclined to suppose that there was an element of unskilfulness in bringing the two together in this way. It appears that the Duke had sent to the doctor some time before he mentioned the fact in court. Portia in her difficulty would naturally think of such a learned Jurist who was also her cousin. The doctor might then have informed her that he had been sent for by the Duke too on that very same question. And this might have hastened Portia's journey to him. There thus appears to be nothing unnatural or unskilful in a coincidence like this.

determine, decide. The learned jurist would come not as advocate but as judge. It not unfrequently happened among the old Romans to submit a case to a Jurist or a body of jurisconsults, and to regard their decision as final.

106. **stays without**, waits outside.

110. The conversation between Bassanio and Antonio gives time to the Duke to read the letter.

courage yet, don't look so dejected; cheer up.

113-4. I am a diseased ram and therefore it is proper that I should die, and not you.

114-5. I am the weakest among you and therefore let me perish sooner than any of you.

117. **live still,** survive me.

120. **whet** on the sole of the shoe.

121. To cut the flesh forfeited by him.

122. We may suppose that Gratiano had so long been holding his peace against himself but he can forbear no longer and bursts forth in an indignant pun.

Not ..soul ; it is not the sole of his shoe but the hardness of his soul that gives a keen edge to the knife. As Gratiano says below it is his sharp envy that makes his metal so keen. The other meaning suggested by Theobald is also possible, *viz.*, that Shylock brings his very soul into hazard by his inexorable relentlessness. The jingle between *sole* and *soul* occurs in other places too in Shakespeare. Steevens compares *2 Hen. iv iv. 5*, "Thou hid'st a thousand daggers in thy thoughts ; Which thou hast whetted on thy stony heart."

124. **hangman,** executioner ; in Shakespeare, not necessarily the man who caused death by hanging.

125. **sharp envy,** cruel hatred. For *envy*, see on l. 10.

126. **wit,** wisdom.

127. **inexecrable,** beyond or past all cursing ; "that cannot be execrated enough" (Wright). Abbott suggests the analogy of 'invaluable'. The 3rd Folio reads 'inexorable' which after Gratiano's fruitless intercession does not seem to be altogether unwarranted.

128. Justice itself deserves to be accused because it has let such a cruel man live so long. It is an accursed justice that lets thee live here—damnation for thee after death !

129. **waver in my faith,** lose steadiness of faith in Christianity ; become so much pagan as to believe with Pythagoras that the souls of animals come to dwell in human bodies. The doctrine of transmigration of souls, is no part of the Christian creed. The soul of a wolf may have found a habitation in Shylock.

130. **Pythagoras,** a Greek philosopher of old, two at least of whose doctrines are still current in literature, *viz.*, that of the music of the spheres and that of the transmigration of the souls. This is alluded to also in *As You Like It*, and *Twelfth Night.*

132. **trunks,** bodies.

currish, malicious ; like that of a cur. The soul of a man-eating wolf left it even when it was hanging from the gallows, and came to inhabit in thee in the mean and malicious condition of a currish spirit.

133. **govern'd,** in a prebirth. **a wolf,** no wolf is hanged for manslaughter. Allen's note is plausible that though Gratiano says *a wolf*, he was really thinking of *a wolvish man.*

who etc., has no verb : it is an instance of 'nominative pendens.'

134. **fell**, cruel. **fleet**, leave the body.

135. **unhallow'd dam**, unholy womb of thy beastly mother.

137. **starved**, hungry. The 'hungry wolf' would be most cruel and a fit type of Shylock.

138-9. It is no use railing so loudly for thou canst not invalidate this bond thereby. Thou canst only injure thy lungs.

offend'st, hurtest ; injurest

140-1. This is meant to be a contemptuous disregard of Gratiano.

cureless, incurable. The Folio reads 'endless'.

law, and not an exhibition of this young man's 'wit'.

143. Certainly Portia. **doctor**, jurist.

147. **give him courteous conduct**, escort him politely ; bring him courteously in.

149. **at**, at the time of. **sick**, whether real or pretended does not matter much Perhaps he was really ill, and so agreed to be a party to the trick arranged by Portia.

151. **in loving visitation**, paying me a friendly visit.

154ff. My opinion improved by his own great learning will, I am sure, serve your purpose. This leaves doubtful whether the quibble by which Portia saves Antonio's life is of her own making or suggested to her by Bellario.

at my importunity, the learned doctor agrees to go at my earnest request.

stead, place.

158. **lack of years**, youth. **lack**, we expect 'have'. Let it be no hindrance to his having reverance and esteem as a doctor. For the grammar, see on l. 75.

160-1. **old**, full of experience.

I leave etc. I hope your grace will accept as a substitute for me, and I hope too that his great learning being put to the test will get him greater praise than I have given him here.

whose, the antecedent is 'him'. **publish**, establish, proclaim.

166. **place** on the bench, *not* at the bar.

167. **difference**, dispute.

168. **holds this present question**, forms the subject of this trial.

169. **throughly**, same as 'thoroughly.' Comp. "thorough briar and thorough bush" in *M. N. D.*

174. **in such rule**, so regular, so perfectly in conformity with all legal requirements.

175. **impugn,** oppose, controvert; deny you justice.

176. Addressed to Antonio.

his danger, *i.e.* within the danger-zone of his prosecution—and his malice. Comp. 'out of debt, out of danger.'

177 The trial is conducted according to the strict forms of legal procedure. After the parties have been called, the judge asks the defendant if he confesses the bond; and when the defendant replies 'I do', the Judge sees no way except to appeal to the humanity of the plaintiff.

178. **must** in Shakespeare does not always imply 'compulsion though Shylock takes it as such.

180ff. This panegyric on 'mercy' is one of the most remarkable in English Mercy is never forced, it is voluntary. It is as refreshing and spontaneous as the rain from heaven. It blesses both him who gives and him who gets it. It is magnificent in proportion as the man who gives it is high. It is a better ornament to a king than his throne and his crown. The king's sceptre is the symbol of his earthly power, it fills him with awe and majesty and inspires others with dread and fear of him. But mercy is superior to power. If kings rule others from their thrones, mercy rules kings from the throne of their hearts; if power is the attribute of kings, mercy is the attribute of gods And earthly kings are then likest gods when they temper justice with mercy. This is Portia's first ground of appeal, her second is this: if we all stand on justice and get nothing but justice from God, we would be in a perilous condition for we could never have salvation. We pray to God for mercy, and ought therefore to give others that mercy for which we so anxiously solicit Heaven.

180. It is the characteristic of mercy that there can be no compulsion in its exercises, it falls as the rain falls from heaven. It is purely a voluntary act.

strained, constrained; forced. Referring to Shylock's query.

181-2. Comp. *Ecclesiasticus* xxxv. 20, "Mercy is seasonable in the time of affliction, as clouds of rain in the time of drought."

twice blest, Mercy is *blest* because she enjoys the power of *blessing* or making others happy. She is *twice* blest because she renders happy both the giver and the receiver. *blest*, endued with the capacity to bless.

183. **gives, takes,** of course, mercy.

184. The mightier the man who shows mercy, the mightier does mercy appear in him. Mercy is most magnificent in those who have power and yet soften it for mercy. Shylock had absolute power over Antonio's life, it would be exceedingly befitting to him to show mercy.

becomes, adorns.

185. The *crown*, the symbol of power, is never so splendid an ornament to a king as mercy.

186-8. The king's sceptre is the symbol of his earthly power, it gives him awful majesty, and fills his subjects with dread and fear of him. Contrarywise, mercy filling him with divine benediction, inspires the subjects with, not fear, but love. Mercy sitting in the hearts of kings evokes the feeling of love in the hearts of the subjects, whereas the sceptre held in his hand calls forth only dread and fear.

186. **shows the force of**, is the type of ; symbolises.

187. Power is *the attribute to*, the inspirer of, goes along with, *awe and majesty*, by hendiadys, awful or awe-inspiring majesty.

188. **Wherein doth sit**, in the king's power consists. **of**, *i.e.* in which kings are held by their subjects.

189. **above**, superior to. Because (1) it, as from a throne in their hearts, rules kings whereas kings rule others ; (2) it is divine, and an attribute to God Himself ; (3) It gives not temporal but divine sway.

191. Mercy is the chiefest of the many attributes of God.

192-3. A king is very like a god when he makes use of the divine attribute of mercy to temper justice with it. Justice is always rigorous, an exercise of power ; mercy softens and enlivens it, an exercise of the divine in man. Comp. *Tit. Andro* I. 1, "Wilt thou draw near the nature of the gods ? Draw near them then in being merciful."

seasons, tempers ; softens.

194. **plea**, demand.

195. **in the course of justice**, if justice were to take its full course unseasoned by mercy. God's Justice would condemn man for his sins ; God's mercy adds the lenitive and saves him.

196. **should**, could ; would be in the way to. Portia, referring to the christian doctrine of salvation and the Lord's Prayer, is not altogether out of character, as Blackstone supposes, for both the doctrine and the Prayer were composed of all that was essential in the Jewish faith. The Jews also believed in the original sin of man, and hoped in God's mercy, not His justice, to send them a redeemer.

pray, as in the Lord's Prayer. 'Forgive us our trespasses that we may forgive them that trespass against us'.

197. **teach**, require. **render**, do unto others.

198. To soften the harshness or cruelty of that decree which, if justice alone which is thy plea were to decide, would necessarily result.

200. **strict**, strictly abiding by law and justice.

202. I take on myself all the responsibility for my deeds. I am not prepared to do any 'deed of mercy', but whatever I do I am ready to bear the consequences of. "An imprecration adopted from that of the Jews to Pilate: 'His blood be on us, and our children' ". (Henley).

203. This line explains 'law'.

204. **discharge**, pay off. **the money**, the debt.

205. **tender** is a legal term.

207. **be bound**, stand security.

208. **on forfeit of**, on condition that if I fail to pay it ten times over, I shall not lose only a pound of my flesh but the Jew may gratify himself with my hands etc.

210. **That malice bears down truth**, (1) it is the Jew's malice and not sense of justice that makes him reject all reasonable offer of accommodation; (2) the malicious jew oppresses the honest debtor; (3) the Jew seeking to gratify his lust for malice sets aside 'that supreme rule of right and equity by which all human actions ought to be directed.' All these differences in meaning are due to the different interpretations of the word *truth* given above.

211. **once**, for once. **Wrest**, make it bear an interpretation which it cannot naturally bear - by an exercise of arbitrary power. If the plaintiff will not yield to reason and appear to be prosecuting maliciously, it is right that his ends should be frustrated by recourse to equity.

212. To do justice, to frustrate the malice of the plaintiff, to do what is right and equitable, break for once the letter of the law.

213. **curb**, check. **of**, in the execution of.

215. **a decree established**, an established or prescribed, time-honoured rule of law.

216. **by the same example**, *i.e.* the example of this irregularity. One irregularity will pave the way for many; one error open the floodgates to many.

219. **A Daniel**, *i.e.* a Judge as wise and impartial as Daniel. Daniel, the prophet, when quite a young man convicted the Elders 'of false witness by their own mouth' against a certain virgin named Susanna. He also detected the impostures of the priests of Bel. The first is told in the Apocryphal *History of Susanna and the Elders*, and the second in the *History of Bel and the Dragon*.

220. **wise young**, see note on Daniel above.

223. **thrice**. Bassanio had offered to pay *twice*, and also to pay it *ten* times over. Portia of her own initiative suggested *thrice*. Take three times your bond and let the debtor go.

224. **in heaven**, sworn before God.

226. **forfeit**, time-expired, and the penalty has become due.

227. **by this bond** ; according to the terms of it.

229. **Be merciful**, one more attempt to stir up the Jew's good feelings.

231. **the tenour**, the terms stated in the bond ; the purport of the stipulation.

233. **exposition**, interpretation.

236. **to**, *i.e.* to pronounce.

238. **stay**, stand.

243-4. 'The intention and meaning of the law, framed for the determination of similar cases, is clearly applicable to, and strongly in favour of, Shylock's right to exact the penalty'.

244. **Hath**, singular because 'intent and purpose' mean almost the same thing.

full relation to, full application to ; fully allows.

247. **more elder**, double comparatives for the sake of emphasis are not unfrequent in Shakespeare. **elder**, older in experience and learning.

248-50. So near completion of his hopes, Shylock savagely gloats over the idea.

251. **Are.** Though this is the only instance in Shakespeare where 'balance' is used as plural, the word and all words of singular form ending in a sibilant, were not unfrequently treated in Elizabethan English as plural.

253. **by**, beside you ; at hand. **on your charge**, at your cost.

255. **nominated**, mentioned, named.

258. The refusal to accede to Portia's common-sense appeal to charity, puts Shylock beyond all considerations of pity when the wheel of fortune carries him down into ruin. It carries him beyond the pale of humanity.

not expressed or mentioned.

260. **armed** with fortitude or patience.

262. **this** dangerous plight.

263-8. In my case fortune seems to be kinder than usual : for she always lets a wretched man survive the loss of all his wealth and position ; she afflicts him physically and makes him suffer all the miseries of poverty in delapidated old age. From this long and lingering agony she has spared me. She lets me die before old age and poverty have crushed me.

264. **is her custom**, is the custom with her ; is usual with her.

still her use, always her custom ; her constant practice.

265. **outlive his wealth**, survive the loss of his wealth.

266. The *hollow*, lustreless eye, and wrinkled brow, are due both to old age and the carking cares of life.

267. **An age of poverty**, a period of distress in the ruin and loss of his wealth. **penance**, punishment; agony.

268. **of** is either appositional; or *of such misery*=so miserable.

270. **the process**, the manner; the detailed description.

271. **speak me fair**, *i.e.* speak *fair*, well, *of* me when I am dead.

272. It would certainly tickle Portia and Nerissa to hear 'bid her be judge' from Antonio.

273. **a love**, *i.e.* a lover; a sincere and true friend.

274. This is the Folio reading; the Quarto reads 'Repent *but* you.' The Folio meaning is, Do not be sorry that you lose a friend as your friend is not sorry that he loses his life to pay off your debt. The Quarto reading means, Do but just repent for me though I do not that I die for you. I prefer the Folio.

277. **with all my heart**, double meaning, (1) most willingly, (2) with all my heart's blood. Such a jest in the mouth of one at the point of death, enhances the pathos.

279. **Which** for 'who', not uncommon in Shakespeare. See v. I. 210.

283. **to deliver you** from the malignant power of this devil.

284. This bit of comedy is wholly undignified in a court of law. The woman gets the better of the judge in Portia.

285. **the offer** to sacrifice her for a friend.

287. **so**, if; provided.

288. **some power**, *i.e.* some supernatural agency. Because all earthly agencies have failed.

currish, dog; having the spirit of a cur.

289-90. It is fortunate for you that you wish it in her absence, that your wife should die and be in heaven to persuade an angel to interfere with the Jew. Such an wish might well breed a domestic quarrel.

empty boasting, brag

291-3. "This braggadocio dealing with the dearest relationship of life sounds to Shylock like rank blasphemy" (Jastrow, quoted by Furness).

See, how monstrous these Christian husbands are, they would sacrifice their dearest wives for their friends! I have a daughter whom, he was just going to say, I would never have sacrificed like any of these men; but he suddenly remembers that he had been robbed of her by a Christian, and exclaims, would that a robber descended from the notorious robber Barrabas had married her, and not a Christian. A robber Jew would have been a more desirable husband than an unfeeling Christian who may offer to sacrifice her for no good cause at all.

291. The Folio puts no point after 'daughter'. It is better to have a dash after it, as showing that Shylock breaks off without completing the sentence, and goes to other matters.

292. **Barrabas** was the notorious robber whose life Pilate offered to the Jews if they would spare Christ. **any** etc, would mean a robber Jew. The robbery would run in his blood.

293. Shylock does not like a Christian husband because (1) he is a Christian, (2) he has robbed him of his daughter, and (3) he might offer to sacrifice his daughter for no good cause.

294. **pursue**, declare; proceed to.

296. This is the inverted order of the sentence—the proper order is given in l. 299. The court can only award it if the law allow it, and not before.

300. This is a sentence indeed! Come, prepare. This is the climax of Shylock's exultation. After that the fall!

302. Just when Shylock is about to execute his fatal sentence, Portia steps in with a verbal quibble—you must shed no drop of blood because blood is not stipulated for in the bond, and you must cut a pound, neither more nor less. Perhaps she had come armed and well prepared with this quibble, and only dallied so long with the grim horror of the Jew's resolution to render him ludicrous at the end. The question of the defect in the law has been discussed thoroughly in the Intro (q. v.).

305. **cutting it**, *i.e.* cutting *of* it.

307. **confiscate.** Abbott gives a long list of words in Shakespeare in which the terminal *-te*, *-t*, *-d*, making them look like participles, the *-ed* is not added in the past tense or the participle.

On the stage, "Shylock staggers backward and drops the knife" (Booth).

308. It is now Gratiano's time to hoist the engineer with his own petard.

310. "In a choked tone of amazement to the Duke, bowing" (Booth).

310. **the act**, the statute-book.

312. *i.e.* with a vengeance.

314. **this offer** of thrice the amount made by the judge in l. 230.

317. **all justice**, *i.e.* nothing but it; justice pure and simple, unmixed with mercy or equity.

318. **the penalty** nominated in the bond, a pound of flesh.

323. **just,** exact.

324-7. Should the flesh thou art permitted to cut be lighter or heavier than a pound in the gross, or by even so much as a grain, the twentieth part of a scruple, by the weight of a hair. There is thus something like a climax.

Hunter omits the comma after 'substance', and interprets, should it be lighter or heavier by the *substance*, *i.e.* the whole amount, of $\frac{1}{20}$ of a scruple or by a *division*, *i.e.* a fraction of $\frac{1}{20}$th of a scruple.

the twentieth part of one poor scruple is a grain.

estimation, weight.

329-30. Gratiano exults in flinging a word of his own at the Jew's face, and the poet makes him use by an unconscious irony the very expression Shylock had delighted in using against Antonio. **on the hip,** see on I. 3 44.

331. **pause.** Some editors suppose that the pause signifies that Shylock is deliberating as to whether he should take the forfeiture, and himself perish along with Antonio. But the fact is he is astounded by the course events have suddenly taken and all words are taken out of his mouth by it. When he recovers a little, he demands the principal and wants to go.

333. In Booth's acting, on Bassanio offering the money, Shylock takes it, but Gratiano wrests the bag from him.

335. **merely,** nothing but. **his bond,** *i.e.* the forfeiture nominated in the bond.

336. **A Daniel,** see on l. 219.

337. **that word :** Daniel.

338. **barely,** only ; nothing but it.

340 **so,** *i.e.* without the shedding of a drop of blood, and without a scruple more or less than a pound.

at thy peril, should either of the above conditions be broken, thou losest thy life as thy act will amount to manslaughter.

342. **question,** talk ; argument. So he turns to leave the court.

343. Shakespeare took the quibble from *Il Pecorone* ; but added this 'another hold' himself.' An alien attempting the life of a citizen, was a criminal punishable with loss of life and property. And Shylock had done as much by Antonio and had brought himself under the statute.

343. **an alien,** as Shylock the Jew was one.

348. **contrive,** plot. Comp. *Julius Cæsar* II. 3, "If not, the Fates with traitors do contrive".

349. **seize**, the usual law term, meaning, 'take possession of'.

350. **privy coffer**, private treasury.

351. **in**, "we should now say *at*" (Abbott). But perhaps *in* is more correct here as meaning 'within the absolute prerogative of the Duke as possessing sovereign powers'.

353. **predicament**, difficult situation ; dangerous positon.

354. **by manifest proceeding**, clearly, undoubtedly ; from the present proceedings in court.

358. **formerly**, above. Warburton unnecessarily suggests 'formally'. **rehearsed**, described ; recited.

359. 'Down upon your knees, and crave the benefit of the statute', was the customary formula with which the clerk of the arraigns in England used to conclude his address to each culprit. Shakespeare might thus have transferred a custom of his own country to a Venetian Court of Justice.

362. **hast not left** to thee ; thou dost not possess even so much money as might enable thee to buy a cord to hang thyself. The state must thus pay for thy hanging.

364. **our**, perhaps 'of Christians'. The difference between the spirit of a Christian and a Jew—a Christian pardons before he is asked while a Jew is inexorable to the end. [illegible]

368. If you humbly intercede for mercy, if you show a penitent contrite spirit, the State's half may be commuted for a fine. [illegible]

369. The State might reduce its own moiety to a fine, but not that of the defendant. [illegible]

370. A good actor may render these lines so pathetically that the audience will at once begin to pity and not execrate the man. The cry is indeed full of pathos especially when we remember that an interested Judge had reduced him to this plight by a bad law.

374. **render**, show to him. This is to give Shylock a deep moral conviction that a Christian is not after all the abominable fellow he imagined him to be. Shylock is to be taught a double lesson in a Christian court—namely, that it was penal to contrive against the life of a Christian, and that a Christian possesses a natural moral superiority over a heathen.

375. **halter**, rope to hang from. Shylock having no money now to buy a cord, must consider the gift as a great one.

376. **So please**, if it so pleases.

377-81. **quit**, remit. The Duke had proposed that he was prepared to reduce the confiscation to a fine. Antonio says that he would be content even if that fine were given up. He would have nothing to say against that. As for his half, he prooceeds to lay down his terms.

These terms have been variously understood and misunderstood because *in use* is susceptible of many interpretations :

in use, (1) in trust. He would hold 'the other half' in trust for Lorenzo and Jessica during Shylock's life-time. On his death the trust would terminate and the remainder would go to Shylock's son and daughter.

(2) at interest. He would hold it at interest during the Jew's life, and render it at his death to Lorenzo. By this arrangement as long as Shylock lived he would get the produce of the estate.

(3) the produce of the property as distinguished from the property itself. Antonio would take not the property but the *use* or produce only of the half, and that only for the Jew's life. This is Dr. Johnson's suggestion. But Antonio, we know, was far too generous a man to make a proposal like this, and he was generally opposed to 'usance'.

To me the best interpretation seems to be that of Ritson, Antonio tells the Duke that if he will abate the fine for the State's half, he (Antonio) will be contented to take the other, in trust, after Shylock's death, to render it to his daughter's husband. That is, it was, during Shylock's life, to remain *at interest* in Antonio's hands, and Shylock was to enjoy the 'produce' of it. This arrangement (really a combination of (1) and (2) above) would be a very fair one for Shylock who would have the benefit of his property, and would at the same time secure the prospect of an estate to Lorenzo who was badly in need of one and ran the risk of getting none if the Jew were allowed to keep his property in his own hands.

383. **presently**, at once. A very hard condition now but a generous one when it was proposed when conversions, even forced conversions, were believed to be for the benefit of a heathen soul. But to Shylock with his settled hatred for Christians, this was the fatallest blow.

384. **record a gift**, sign and file a document.

385. A gift or legacy of all that he possesses at the time of his death for the benefit of Lorenzo and Jessica.

386. **recant**, revoke, withdraw.

389. These words are uttered very plaintively. Whatever disgust Shylock may have roused in us by his bloodthirstiness, vanishes when we find him the victim of what looks like a conspiracy got up against him by a fictitious Judge allowing whatever conditions the victorious defandant is willing to impose for the benefit of men of his own conviction.

392. **I am not well.** Very pathetic, to be sure. "When he blankly utters the bare words, 'I am content', and faintly adds, 'Let

me go hence, I am not well,'—we feel that he is tottering to his death-bed,—his only remaining refuge". (Fletcher).

393. **get thee gone** is certainly contemptuous. The Duke might have been more courteous to a broken-down plaintiff.

394. Two is the usual number of godfathers who undertake at the baptism of an infant, to look after its religious and moral welfare till it is of age. Gratiano would have 10 more to make up 12, the usual number of Jurors, to convict the Jew to death.

395. **ten more** to make up a Jury of twelve men. This Is an application of an English custom to a state that did not observe it. The Jurors were by an old joke called 'godfathers at the gallows'.

396. To hang thee and not to christen thee.

the font, the baptismal font ; the vessel containing the baptismal water.

Exit Shylock. Shylock goes out with more of the pity of the audience than their indignation. It might be said of him that nothing on the stage so became him as his manner of leaving it. We see him no more ; and the tragic stress ended, the comedy trips on to its sweet and delicious end.

398. **desire of pardon,** beg pardon of you ; excuse me. *of* means 'as regards', 'concerning', 'in respect of'.

401. Your leisure is not at your command. You cannot make time to stay.

402. **gratify**. make a present to him ; give him a reward. Judges were formerly paid not by salaries from the state but be gratuities from the winning party. Portia moreover was an advocate sitting as a judge ; hence she might be paid a remuneration without impropriety.

403. **bound**, obliged.

train, retinue of followers.

406. **in lieu whereof**, in return for the services thus rendered to us. There is a peculiar grace in making Bassanio offer the reward to his own wife.

408. **cope**, pay, reward, requite. **withal**, with (the three thousand ducats), This is the emphatic form of *with*.

413. **service** ; a customary expression of obligation, 'We are your most obedient servants'.

411. I am well paid (even though I receive no remuneration from you) because I am satisfied that I have been able to save your life.

413. **account**, hold ; regard.

414. **more mercenary**, desirous of getting a reward other than that of the satisfaction arising out of a service done to another. *mercenary*, greedy, covetous.

415. **know,** recognise. Note the humour implied in the request.

417. **attempt you further,** again try to induce you to take something from us.

418-2. If you will not take a fee, take something as a token of our gratitude to you, something that will keep you in mind of us. **remembrance,** souvenir, keepsake.

tribute, acknowledgment of our gratitude.

420. The two requests are—(1) Do take some remembrances, and (2) pardon me for being so importunate.

422-3. *To Antonio, To Bassanio*; these stage directions were added by the Clarendon Press Editors.

424. Do not withdraw your hand. I will take nothing else but this ring. Portia pretends not to know why Baasanio withdrew his hand.

425. **in love,** (1) out of the 'love and service' you have promised me, and (2) out of your love as my husband.

427. I will not so far disgrace myself as to give you a mere trifle in return for your giving me my friend's life. Both Bassanio and Portia knew well enough why the ring was refused.

429. **a mind to,** a fancy for; I like it and must have it.

436. I do not prize the ring for the value. I will give you the most costly ring in Venice,—I dont care for the value—only certain dear memories and pledges are associated with this ring, and that is what makes it impossible for me to part with it.

431. **dearest,** costliest.

434. Liberal in promises, niggardly in fulfilling them.

436. **answered,** refused. How he must reckon without his host.

437. Finding all excuses unavailing, Bassanio at last frankly confesses the truth. There is a dramatic necessity also in the excuses. Had Bassanio readily parted with it, there would have been the chances of another domestic tragedy which could only be removed by tears and protestations.

440. **'scuse,** excuse. That is the way men generally resort to when they don't want to part with anything.

441. **An if,** *an* in such expressions is the same as *if*, so that the phrase implies emphasis. A guarantee like this coming from the woman herself who might stir up a quarrel, ensures Bassanio's safety afterwards.

443. **hold out enemy,** continue to be your enemy. **for ever,** she may fall out with you for a while but cannot cherish a protracted bitterness.

hug

444. **to me.** There is what is called Sophoclean Irony in an assertion like this. The audience know, but not Bassanio, the full significance of what the speaker means.

445-6. Weigh my love and how much the Judge has deserved at our hands against the injunction of your wife not to part with the ring. **valued**, weighed.

447. This alacrity on the part of Bassanio is highly commendable. It shows that the sense of gratitude overcomes all other considerations in him.

451. **presently**, at once. **will thither**, the verb of motion, *go*, is suppressed or absorbed in *thither*.

Scene 2.

This short and apparently insignificant scene is a connecting link between the tragedy of the Jew's misfortune and the comedy of the Christian lovers. Portia sends a deed of conveyance to Shylock thus completing the total wreck of his fortune, and by desiring Gratiano to show Nerissa the way to the Jew's house, gives her an opportunity of coaxing a ring out of him, to add another platform to the comedy of the rings already prepared by Bassanio parting with his.

3. Read, 'And be at home a day before'.

4. Because it secures him an ample estate. It will be a godsend to him.

6. **upon more advice**, upon more reflection ; on maturer deliberation.

8. **That** ; our company at dinner.

11. A contrast is meant between 'youth' and 'old'.

15. **Thou mayst**, wilt certainly be able to get the ring from him.

old swearing, 'old' is augmentative. Dyce explains *old* as 'plentiful, abundant, great'. The phrase means, a good deal of swearing. Comp. *Macb.* II. 3, 2, "*old* turning the key".

17. **outface**, put them out of countenance by confronting them boldly and swearing that they did part with the rings to women. **outswear**, swear harder and louder than they.

ACT V.

The tragic stress has passed off, and we are in a realm of love and music and moonlight. This last Act gives to the whole play the character and interest of a comedy which centres round the episode of the rings.

No one can be sure from the beginning whether from certain given materials Shakespeare would make a comedy or a tragedy. Managers of theatres sometimes take exception to this last Act as though unnecessarily prolonging the play and also because from their personal experience they know that the audience prepare to leave as soon as the trial scene is over. But for all that what is caviare to the general may not be caviare to the intelligent reader, and one could hardly wish away this happy winding of the play with lyric love and romantic memories.

Scene 1.

This scene is placed in the garden at Belmont. It is a moonlit night, and the young lovers in the first hey-day of their amours have come out to disport themselves in the mellow splendour of it. It is not a scene of action but of description ; it is lyric in character, idyllic in charm.

Verplanck remarks that such a night of liquid radiance is to be met with only in Italy or the East. "It is the intense feeling of reality in this scene that, to my mind, gives strong confirmation of the opinion that Shakespeare had, at some period prior to this drama, wandered under the skies and moons of Italy". But it is by no means conclusive. England has bright nights too and the poet had his magic imagination.

2-3. **kiss.** In a scene of love, even nature herself is in love. The winds woo and kiss the trees and the trees yield to them in bashful silence.

no noise. any rustling among the trees would be a disturbing element unbefitting a quiet picture of tranquillity and love. For the moral significance, see above.

4 ff. Hunter suggests that Shakespeare may have taken these stories about Thisbe, Dido, and Medea from Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women*, and that about Troilus from his *Troilus and Cresside*. In all the stories except that of Medea, even the moon is in chancer ; the association of the moon with the Medea story, Shakespeare might have got in Ovid either in the original if he had Latin enough to read it or in Golding's translation, a book which Shakespeare undoubtedly read and made much of.

Whalley points out that there is an imitation of this passage in the old comedy of *Wily Beguiled*. See 'Date of Composition' in Introduction.

4-6. Troilus, a prince of Troy, was in love with Cressida, daughter of the Trojan priest and soothsayer Calchas. She proved false to Troilus, and, on her capture by the Greeks, transferred her love to Diomedes, a Greek hero.

The story was very popular in the Middle Ages and had special currency in England from an old drama on the subject which Shakespeare afterwards took as the basis of his. Shakespeare alludes to it in many places, *e.g.*, *Henry V.*

4. Troilus 'mounting the Trojan walls' is taken from Chaucer, "upon the wallis fast eke would he walke".

6. **lay** as a prisoner in the hands of the Greeks.

7-9. Pyramus and Thisbe were among the noted lovers of old. They had arranged to meet at the Tomb of Ninus; but Thisbe going before was scared away by a lion Pyramus coming later concluded from signs in the place that Thisbe had been killed, whereupon he killed himself, and Thisbe followed suit. The story forms the subject of the interlude played by the Athenian mechanics in *Midsummer Night's Dream.*

7. **fearfully**, in fear: full of fear. **overtrip**, walk over. **the dew**, the dewy grass.

8. **ere himself**, before she saw the lion himself.

10-12. Dido was the queen of Carthage. Aeneas landed at Carthage and stayed for sometimes in her court as her guest. She fell in love with him, but Aeneas came away without returning it.

10. **a willow**, in the classical story no mention is made of the willow. It is Shakespeare's addition. The *willow* is the emblem of misery,—"the willow worn of forlorn paramours".

11. **waft**, wafted, made a sign to; beckoned to. It is an instance of the absorption of the—*ed* into the final—*t*. **her love**, her lover Aeneas. There is nothing in the classical story about Dido standing on the sea-shore. Hunter suggests that Shakespeare perhaps transferred the circumstances connected with the story of Ariadne in Chaucer to Dido:

> And to the stronde barefote faste she went...
> No man she sawe, and yet shone the moone
> And hye upon a rokke she went soone
> And sawe hys barge saylynge in the see.

13-4. Medea was the wife of Iason. She restored her father-in-law Aeson to youthful vigour by a herb which she gathered in the moonlight and made potent by her magic art.

Moonlight was supposed to confess special virtues on herbs.

13. **enchanted**, rendered specially efficacious by her magic art.

14. **renew**, restore to youth.

15. **steal**, (1) come stealthily away, (2) rob.

16. **an unthrift love**, a prodigal or impecunious lover. Lorenzo in his humility contrasts himself with the wealthy Jew.

not having money
[illegible]

19-20. Here begins one of those fallings-out of love which the more endears. Jessica calls Lorenzo faithless ; he calls her a shrew, a woman of a peevish or sour temparament.

22. **Slander her love**, speak ill of her lover ; abuse him calling him faithless in love. *it*, her slandering him.

23. **out-night**, speak to you of many more such moonlight nights with romantic associations.

24. **footing**, footfall ; steps.

Enter Stephano The folio has 'Enter Messenger'. 'Enter Stephano' is Theobald's emendation.

25. **in silence**, Abbott states the grammar rule that *the* was frequently omitted before a noun when another had it before it, especially in prepositional phrases.

30-2. "These holy crosses still, as of old, bristle the land in Italy. ...Besides those contained in churches, they mark the spot where heroes were born, where saints rested, where travellers died. They rise on the summits of hills, and at the intersections of roads... The days are past when pilgrims of all ranks, might be seen kneeling and praying 'for happy wedlock hours', or for whatever else lay nearest their hearts." (Knight).

Portia wandered about among these crosses and prayed for peaceful days in the enjoyment of matrimonial happiness.

33. **a holy hermit**, Dr. Johnson objected to this hermit because he appears nowhere and is never heard of again. It need not be supposed, as it has been, that it was her servant Balthazar disguised as one. Portia's devotions might not have been feigned, and a holy hermit might have acted as her cicerone among these crosses.

34. **my master** : Bassanio.

35. Double negatives for emphasis.

37. **ceremoniously**, with fitting ceremony ; in a fit way. It is properly an adjective to 'welcome'—'let us prepare a ceremonious welcome'. This is fig. Hypallage.

39. Launcelot is imitating the horn of the courier who has brought the news of Bassanio's arrival.

41. Not that the man does not recognize Master Lorenzo by his voice. It is in Launcelot's manner to pretend not to know.

All the Quartos and most of the Folio's read, "Did you see M. Lorenzo &c. M. Lorenzo, sola, sola". Many editors adopted, Master Lorenzo and Mistress Lorenzo, or Mr. Lorenzo and Mrs. Lorenzo'. The reading in the Text is that of the Cambridge Editors, followed by all modern editors.

46. **a post**, a messenger riding post. **his horn**, *i.e.*, his post-horn (on which he used to blow to announce his approach,

Launcelot confuses it with the mythal 'horn of plenty', the *cornucopia.*

67ff. After the interruption of the Messengers the lyric conversation is resumed.

49. **expect**, wait for. This is the Latin sense.

51. **signify**, tell them within the house. We have had enough of 'signify' in II. 2.

53. **music**, *i.e*, the musicians.

54. **sleeps**; Knight in a note on this word points out that in Italy the trees are so disposed in a garden that they cannot overshadow beds of roses and other flowers which thus lie open to the sun and the dews. The moonlight lying calm and tranquil upon these beds may well be described as sleeping in contrast with the flickering reflections of the moon through the shadowy trees hard by.

banks, elevated ground.

56. **creep in**, steal into our souls through our ears.

57. Are well in accord with the sweet strains of music. Night and the silence of the night render music sweeter and more charming.

Become, harmonise with ; are fit for. **touches**, strains. Lit. 'the act (movement) of the hand on a musical instrument.'

the floor of heaven, the face of the sky.

59. Is laid or covered thick with bright stars. The comparison is with the floor of some holy edifice diversified with stones of various colours.

patines, or patens, a gold plate for the bread in the Eucharist. Here, of course, the stars looking like golden plates.

The Folio reads *pattens*. Warburton changed into *patens*, meaning given above. Malone into *patines*. The formidable objection to *patten* is that "there is no happiness or propriety in likening stars to dishes, not even golden ones. I have no doubt that *pattern* was the word from the beginning, and that Lorenzo was speaking of the stars as in their constellations, not individually ; and the constellations may not unsuitably be spoken of as *patterns*, just as we speak of the pattern of mosaic work" (Hunter.) But perhaps the reference is not to the constellations because in the very next line Lorenzo refers to 'the smallest orb,' meaning of course 'a star.' It is difficult to choose between *patines* and *patterns* ; but it is safe to follow the Quartos and the Folios and retain 'patines' which is only a modified form of 'pattens' or patens.'

A question might arise as to whether in the splendid moonlight, the small stars could be visible. But is it unreasonable to suppose that the moon was now being gradually overcast with clouds? In l. 92, we have "when the moon *shone*."

Hallam calls this passage, "the most sublime, perhaps, in Shakespeare."

60-2. There is not a star in the sky, however small, that does not, as it revolves in its own sphere or round the earth, sing like an angel ceaselessly and in harmony with the young innocent-eyed cherubs of heaven.

The allusion is to what is popularly known as the Pythagorean doctrine of the music of the spheres supposed by the great philosopher to explain the regularity in the movement of the heavenly bodies. Each was presided over by a cherub to whose music it revolved round the earth or moved in its sphere. This cherub-harmony explained the apparent harmony in the physical universe.

60. **orb**, star.

61. **But**, that does not. **his** for 'its,' as frequently in Shakespeare; or *orb* may be supposed to be personified. **motion**, see above.

62. **still**, always, ceaslessly. **quiring**, singing, in concert or harmony. **young-eyed cherubins**, cherubs are always represented as young with bright, innocent-looking eyes. In mediaeval tradition the cherubs were credited with exceptionally keen vision. Hence the particular reference to the *eyes*. Schmidt explains, "having the fresh look of youth." Certainly some thing more is meant. The cherub host of heaven sing in praise of the Almighty, and the spheres join in harmony with them.

63-5. "Each of us has as perfect harmony in our souls as the harmony of the spheres, in as much as we have the quality of being moved by sweet sounds; but our gross terrestrial part, which environs us, deadens the sound, and prevents our hearing" (Malone).

63. **harmony**. *i.e.*, the power of perceiving or responding to harmony. The quality of being 'moved with concord of sweet sounds,' which every normal human being possesses, is evidence that we have 'harmony' in us. As this 'harmony' is heavenly it is lodged in the heavenly or immortal part of us, namely, the soul. If it be in us, why do we not hear it? This is answered in the next two lines.

64-5. We cannot hear it because the heavenly soul in us, is shrouded in a gross material body which deadens the noise, and acts as a bar between us and that music. We could hear it if the body were not there; we will hear it when the muddy vesture has fallen off.

this...decay, this body subject to decay. A poetic circumlocution. *of decay* is contrasted with 'immortal' above.

close it in, *i.e.*, the soul. The Folio reads 'close in it' which Knight justifies as a compound 'close-in-it.' **hear it**, *i.e*, the harmony.

Milton in *Il Penseroso* speaks of music "untwisting all the chains that tie the hidden soul of harmony" which some commentators explain as referring to the harmony hidden in the soul.

66. Wake the Moon-goddess from her 'sleep' on the bank (l. 54.) **Diana,** properly the goddess of hunting, was identified with Luna, the goddess of the moon. In simple English, break the silence of this sweet moonlit night with a song.

67. **touches,** see above. **mistress,** Portia.

68. **draw,** attract. The reference may also be to the triumphal car in which a victorious Roman general was *drawn* home.

69. Perhaps she inherited this from her father. See II. 5.

70. If you are never merry when you hear music it is because you are wholly absorbed in it. You do not retain that aloofness which is necessary for appreciating anything.

71ff. The lines that follow contain the best eulogy on music in English literature. Even a herd of cattle and colts, fetching mad bounds, will suddenly stand and listen to music. Such is the power of music that poets have said that trees, stones and floods, used to dance to the music of Orpheus. There is nothing so stockish or so violent that music will not for the time being soften him or it. It may be said that all men have music in themselves and are moved with the concord of sweet sounds. If there be one who is not, he is a criminal and fit for all manner of crimes. He has a dull spirit and a mind as dark as hell. He should never be trusted, he deserves no confidence. He must be put beyond the pale of humanity.

71. **herd** of cattle.

72. **unhandled,** wild ; not broken in. Malone compares *The Tempest* iv. 1. 176-8.

73. **Fetching mad bounds,** jumping wildly.

bellowing refers to cattle ; **neighing** to colts.

74. Which, this wanton frolicksomeness, is the result of the hot condition of their youthful blood.

76. **air,** strain.

77. **a mutual stand,** a sudden stand altogether ; common.

78. The natural savageness in their eyes as they look towards the music, softened by the influences of it. They look modestly and not savagely.

79. **the poet,** if Shakespeare meant any particular author, it was his favourite Ovid. We have other instances of Ovid's "feigning" in *As You Like It.*

80. **feign,** fancy. Touchstone in *As You Like It,* calls poetry 'feigning'.

Orpheus was a mythical bard of Thebes who is supposed to have possessed this miraculous power. On the death of his wife Eurydice he went down into hell, and moved even the iron heart of Pluto to agree to restore his wife to him. See Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penscroso*. **floods**, rivers and streams.

81-2. Nothing is ever so insensible, so violent, that it does not yield to the soft influences of music.

stockish, stupid, insensible. **hard**, callous. **his** for *its*, see above

83-8. The man who cannot appreciate music, who is not moved by sweet strains of music, is no honest man at all. He is an abnormal type of humanity, capable of committing all manner of crimes. His spirit is dull, his feelings are hellish, he should not be trusted.

Steevens calls it 'a capricious sentiment' and does not believe that it is pregnant either with physical or moral truth or poetic beauty. Steevens, one is afraid, puts himself into the category, of the condemned, and becomes, as Douce calls him, "a very Timon in music." We must not of course judge this great passage by the letter but by the spirit.

83. See on l. 63. **in himself**, *i.e.* in his soul. This becomes evident if he be not susceptible to strains of music.

84. **concord**, agreement, harmony. A *concord of sweet sounds* is, briefly, 'music.'

85. **stratagems**, cunning machinations. **spoils**, thefts.

86. **motions**, workings.

87. **affections**, feelings. **Erebus**, in the Greek conception, a region of total darkness between the Earth and Hades. Here equivalent to 'hell.'

88. Comp. what Julius Cæsar, a shrewd observer of humanity, said about Cassius, "He hears no music...such men as he be never at heart's ease...And therefore are they very dangerous."

90. **his**, *its*. As above.

91. They could see the candle only when a passing cloud had darkened the moon. The naughty world is compared to this darkness, and a good deed, like that she had herself done, to the light of a candle. A good deed in the bad world is like a light in the darkness.

naughty had formerly a wider circuit of meaning than now. It meant, wicked, corrupt.

93. The moon dims the candle; the greater light always dims the lesser. This is true in the moral world also.

95-7. A viceroy shines as brightly as a king when the king is absent; in his presence he loses all his glory. An inland brook has a full body of water, a distinct personality, as long as it is away from the sea, but loses its own self and identity when it merges into it.

95. **by**, beside him; present. **state**, dignity. Comp. Milton, "High on a throne of royal *state*."

97. **the main of waters**, the sea.

98. **your music**, *i.e.*, the music of the musicians of your house; the band of your house playing.

99-109. Nothing is absolutely good but good relatively, or in reference to circumstances. Thus music is sweeter in the silence of the night than in broad and noisy day. The nightingale singing by day when every goose would be cackling, would be no sweeter than the wren. The crow and the lark would sing equally harshly unless we brought a mind attentive to their respective notes.

without respect, *i.e.*, without reference to circumstances (external or in the mind of man).

101. **that virtue**, the quality of sweetness.

103. **when neither is attended**, when the mind is preoccupied with other matters and that favourable circumstance which is necessary to render a thing good is absent.

104. **he**, it is the male bird that sings, but the tradition connected with Philomela has placed that virtue to the credit of the female bird.

105. The sweet music of the nightingale would be lost in the discordant cackling of the goose—and thus that silence which is favourable to music would be absent to enable the hearer to discriminate and appreciate the nightingale's song from the chirping of the wren.

107-8. Even good things do not attain perfection and deserve the praise due to them unless they are well-timed. It is the fit season that gives to each thing its flavour of perfection. Thus even the lark and the nightingale are not sweet and do not get praise from us unless they sing in the fit season, namely, at night.

season'd, befitted. **by season**, *i.e.* by favourable circumstances; by their due or right time.

109-10. The moon is not now visible being obscured by clouds. This is expressed by Portia in the classical imagery of the moon sleeping with Endymion. She asks her musicians to cease playing so as not to disturb the calm and peaceful night.

Endymion was a beautiful young shepherd with whom, as he was sleeping on Latmus, Selene or Luna (the Moon) fell in love. The story may be read in Keats's famous poem *Endymion*. Endymion seems to have been overfond of sleeping—hence the appropriateness of the imagery here.

The Quartos and the Folios read, "Peace, *how* the moon sleep" etc. Malone changed *how* into *ho*. The interjection *ho* was formerly used to command a cessation of noise, as well as of fighting. Here, of course, it is a command to her musicians to cease playing, and, as the stage-direction says, 'Music ceases.' This emendation was objected to by Hunter and Knight who think that it would be "a singularly unladylike act of Portia" to command the music to cease. It is difficult to see the point of this argument for how could it be improper for a lady to command "her own musicians in her own domain" to leave off playing? If *how* were retained, the meaning would be, as Knight says, Portia checks herself (she had been speaking rather loudly),—'Peace', *hush*, and then gives her poetic reason for being silent, the moon sleeps etc. Knight believes the music ceased then as a coincidence. But it would certainly be a strange coincidence, and almost incredible. The right word perhaps is *ho*, spelt, as not unfrequently, *how* or *howe*. Another very weak and pointless emendation is *now*. Malone's reading has been generally followed.

110-1. The moon being obscured, Lorenzo is left to recognise Portia by her voice.

111-2. Portia is of course speaking modestly of herself when she compares her voice to the not very musical voice of the cuckoo. She must not be taken seriously.

113. In their retirement in the nunnery—that is what she wants to palm off on Lorenzo. See III. 4.

114. **which** for 'who'; our husbands. **speed**, fare. **words** prayers.

120. Do not show by their bearing that we have been away from home and just come back.

A tucket, a flourish or a set of notes on the trumpet common in Shakespeare to announce the coming in of a great man on the stage.

122. **his**, which he had taken as his own. Perhaps each aristocrat had his own peculiar flourish.

123. **tell-tales**, betrayers of secret.

124-6. The moonlight is rather pale—paler than usual, it is like *sick*, wan or pallid, daylight, like a day when the sun is hid behind the clouds. The moon had again come out.

paler, than either (1) usual or (2) daylight.

127-8. When it is night with us it is day with those who are in the other hemisphere. But if you call the night a day and also use it for walking out, you who are such a brilliant luminary, you turn our night into a day, and it may be said that we too have our day when those who are in the Antipodes have theirs. Bassanio has overhead Portia's speech, remonstrates with her for walking out at night, and also pays her a loving compliment.

129. Portia takes up the complimentary part, and says, 'Let me give light but let me not be light.' This quibble on *light* is extremely common in Shakespeare. *light*, frivolous, light in character.

130. **light**, frivolous. **heavy**, sorrowful.

132. **sort**, ordain. Let Him do what He likes.

136. **in all sense**, in all reason ; in every way.

137. **much bound**, under a heavy, almost fatal, security.

138. I have been richly, amply repaid, by being thus introduced by Bassanio to his accomplished wife. His obligation to me, he has repaid in thus etc.

acquitted of, repaid for.

139. **our house.** "How delicate this little touch of generosity and modesty ; she has just endowed her husband with her property."

140. **It**, my welcome to you.

141. **scant**, make or cut sort. **breathing**, in words, "verbal, complimentary form, consisting of mere *breath*, *i. e.*, words', (Malone).

finish completely

142. The episode of the rings which is to round off the comedy, commences. It had undoubtedly been pre-arranged that Nerissa should start it

wrong in saying that I gave it to a new mistress.

144. **for my part**, for my sake.

145. You resent it so bitterly.

147. **hoop**, circle, ring, used slightingly.

148. **posy**, "a motto inscribed on the innerside of a ring."

The fashion of putting such posies prevailed from the middle of the 16th to the close of the 17th century.

149. **cutler's poetry**, verses inscribed on knives etc., or cutlery in general.

Gratiano means, It was a paltry ring with a very trifling, common—place inscription on it.

151. Nerissa says that the value of the ring or the character of the posy did not matter. What mattered was the oath taken upon it.

what, exclamation of impatience.

157. **for me**, for my sake ; for the love you pretended for me.

156. **respective**, mindful, careful.

157. **God's my judge**, the Folio reading, 'wel I know.' The change was made to avoid coming under James I's statute against swearing on the stage.

[illegible] way – scantily done for deception or mockery, i.e. practical joke

158. That clerk will never have a beard. Your giving it to a clerk is a hoax, you gave it to a woman. Note 'the irony'—the audience know what she means.

159. **to be a man**, *i.e*, to reach up to manhood.

162. In Shakespeare's time female parts were acted by boys. Hence the disguise was not difficult. And there is a humour in Gratiano's protests.

scrabbed, scubby, shabby, mean-looking. Some commentators make it=stubbed, stunted, dwarfish. A description like this, the outcome of Gratiano's perplexed condition of mind, tickles Nerissa and the audience.

163. **higher**, taller.

164. **prating**, talkative.

168. **stuck**, put; planted firmly.

169. Fastened to your flesh and made one with it by the pledging of faith.

170. **my love**, Bassanio. Note how cleverly Portia makes the quarrel her own.

172. **leave it**, part with it.

174. **master**, is master of; contains.

176. **An**, if. If such an unkind cause of grief were given to me by my husband

177-8. **I were best**, see on II. 8. 33.

defending it, defending the ring against one who tried by force to pluck it off.

179. It shows uncommon powers of human observation on the part of Shakespeare that he makes Gratiano implicate Bassanio in a quarrel in which he himself had been nonplussed. We naturally think it some protection that we sin in a large company and in a good company too.

involu
entang

puzzled, confounded

182. **writing** out Shylock's deed of gift.

183. **man**, the clerk. **master**, the judge.

189. As your finger is of my ring. Your heart is void of truth, it is a false heart.

190-1. Not a very alarming promise to herself and the audience, but just the most startling to poor Bassanio.

193. **to whom**, how kind to us the judge was to whom.

194. **for whom**, how dear to me the friend was for whom.

195. **for what**, how momentous the occasion was on which.

196. **left**, parted with.

14

198. You would not be so displeased at my conduct as you are. **abate**, diminish, lessen.

199. **virtue**, power. It gave you absolute right over me and all that is mine. The idea is that of magic giving particular efficacy to a thing.

200. Said of course good-humouredly.

201. **to contain**, to retain. If you had thought that you were bound in honour to keep it and not part with it.

203. **What man**, emphatic for '*no* man'. There is also the suggestion that it was not a *man* but a *woman* who took the ring—for no *man* can ever be so unreasonable.

204-5. **defended it...zeal**, tried with some zeal to keep the ring in your possession.

wanted, *i.e.*, who would have wanted, who would have been so lacking in (modesty *as*). Two things are implied—(1) no man can be so unreasonable, (2) no man can be so immodest. **modesty**, moderation.

206. To demand the thing regarded by another as sacred. **urge**, importunately demand. **a ceremony**, a sacred object.

207. She teaches me to believe that you parted with the ring to a woman.

208. **but**, if not.

210. **a civil doctor**, (1) a doctor of, one learned in, civil law; (2) a polite doctor, who by his politeness put us under the obligation of giving him just what he would have.

214. **Even he**, *i.e.*, *him*. I suffered him to go displeased away,—even him, who had saved the life of my friend.

215. **enforced**, who enforced him? Antonio. But Bassanio is too gentlemanly a man to disclose the name of his friend in a quarrel of this kind.

216. My own sense of shame, my own sense of courtesy due to one who had done such service, impelled me to give the ring.

217-8. My sense of honour would not tolerate that I should let myself be noted for ingratitude. **besmear**, soil (my honour).

220. **these blessed candles of the night**, the stars in heaven. The comparison of stars with candles is common in Shakespeare—Comp. *Macb.* II. 1. 5; *Rom and Jul.* III. 5. 9.

224 **the jewel** on the ring.

227. I would be so liberal as to give him even my person. Let him not therefore come near my house.

228. **advised**, see on II. 1. 42.

229. **to my own protection**, *i.e.* to myself. Always stay by me.

230. **take**, catch.

231. If I catch him with my wife, I will undo the young clerk for ever.

sham

233. Portia, with a true princely courtesy in her, perceives that a feigned quarrel of this nature should not be allowed to inconvenience her guest, and therefore changes her tone. She checks herself when she perceives that the jest is going beyond the bounds of propriety.

234. **enforced**, I was forced by circumstances to commit.

238. **doubly**, once in each eye.

239. **double self**, (1) swear emphatically as though by twice yourself, once in each eye of mine, (2) swear by thy self which is full of double-dealing or duplicity.

240. **an oath of credit**, such an oath (sworn doubly by thy two selves one in each eye of mine) would be an oath well worth believing in ; a credible oath.

243. **lend**, pledge as a security. **wealth**, welfare, benefit, weal. These two words, *wealth* and *weal*, are almost synonymous, as in 'common-*weal*' and 'common-*wealth*'.

244 **Which**, either (1) my body or (2) his wealth, his happiness. My body would have perished but for the judge, and along with it, his happiness would also have been at an end.

245. **miscarried**, perished.

246. This time the security will be not my body but a far more valuable thing, namely, my soul.

247. **advisedly**, deliberately ; purposely.

248. **this** : the ring she had got of Bassanio. This is the disentanglement of the catastrophe.

249. **better**, more carefully.

This is like mending highways that are already fair and do not require to be mended, *i.e.* trying to set right men who have done no wrong and therefore deserve no chastisement.

set forth, started.

258. **even but now**, only now.

261. **unseal**, open ; break the seal.

263. **richly**, with rich cargoes ; richly laden.

suddenly, unexpectedly.

265. **chanced on**, happened to get.

266. **dumb** with amazement.

268. **living**, riches ; the means of living on the earth.

270. **road**, roadstead ; harbour.

271. **My clerk**, Nerissa; my quandom clerk. The 'comforts' refer to the disposition of the Jew's property.

272. **without a fee**, which, as a clerk, I might reasonably demand, and which once I did demand of Gratiano.

276. **manna**, the food miraculously sent from heaven to feed the Jews on their way from Egypt to Palestine.

277. **starved**, starving.

279. **Of**, in regard to.

280-1. **Examine us with questions.** It is a technical legal expression. "In the court of Queen's Bench, when a complaint is made against a person for a 'contempt' the practice is that before sentence is finally pronounced he is sent into the crown office, and there being 'charged upon interrogatories' is made to swear that he will 'answer all things faithfully' (Campbell.)

interrogatories, questions.

282. **while**, as long as.

The rhymes finish the comedy with a sense of relief, while the true husbandly sentiment in Gratiano's speech is the dramatist's good—humoured advice to persons similarly circumstanced as he, among the audience and in society.

APPENDIX.

1. *Shakespeare's use of Prose.*

Prose is used by Shakespeare, says Abbott,

i. in the comic scenes; Comp. the scenes in which Launcelot figures.

ii. in letters; Comp. Antonio's to Bassanio in III. 2, or Bellario's to the Duke in IV. 1.

iii. when the dramatic pitch is lowered; e.g., in I. 2.

iv. to express

(*a*) frenzy,

(*b*) madness; and

(*c*) the higher flights of imagination.

v. to express

(*a*) bitterness and contempt

(*b*) wit and irony.

vi. as the common vehicle of expression with characters in 'low life.'

2. *Shakespeare's use of rhymes.*

i. Rhyme is used by Shakespeare as the effective termination of scenes; Comp. end of III. 2, III. 4, II. 9, II. 7, II. 6, etc. etc.

ii. It is also used to mark an 'aside' and to distinguish it from the rest of the scene.

3. *Shakespeare's use of 'Thou' and 'You.'*

In Shakespeare 'you' is the pronoun of respect, friendship, or social equanty; 'thou' of contempt, superiority, insult. It is also used in solemn prayers,

In the Trial scene the Duke in speaking to Antonio and Shylock uses 'Thou'; to Portia 'You'. Shylock uses 'you' in reference to the Judge and the Duke, 'Thou' to Antonio and Gratiano.

In I. 3. Shylock's 'you' is the pronoun of respect; Antonio's 'Thou' of contempt.

Antonio and Bassanio always use 'you' towards each other.

Bassanio and Portia use 'you' uniformly.

'Thou' is the pronoun of anger or frenzy; 'You' if deliberate calmness. Tubal uses 'you' to Shylock, Shylock in his frenzy 'Thou'.

'Thou' is the more rhetorical pronoun; 'You' more conversational.

In II. 2. Bassanio remonstrating with Gratiano uses 'Thou',—"Thou art too wild," etc; speaking to him more familiarly, 'you'—"put on your boldest suit of mirth."

TEST QUESTIONS.

(Taken from the Calcutta University Calenders.)

1. Whence did Shakespeare derive the story of the Bond. Indicate the sources from which Sh. derived the stories of the Casket and of the pound of flesh.

2. Describe the character of Antonia, Portia, and Shylock, showing the poetical justice of Sh's. treatment.

3. Notice any good points in Shylock.

4. How is Portia in this play distinguished among the women of Shakespeare?

5. "The wit of Portia is like atter of roses." Explain.

6. Consider the character of Jessica in itself, and in its relation to that of Portia.

7. Refer to passages in this play showing that Sh. was personally acquainted with Italy, and with Venice in particular.

8. Criticise Antonio's treatment of Shylock.

9. What contemporary events may have been in Sh's mind in the trial scene?

10. What various interpretations have been given of Sh's conception of Shylock?

11. Write a note on the law in the trial scene.

12. By what process does Sh. extenuate the fierce bitterness of Shylock's nature? Illustrate from first three Acts of this play.

13. Sketch the character of Gratiano. In what relation Nerissa stands to Portia?

14. Describe the attitude of society towards the Jews in Sh's time. What are the poets teachings on the subject?

15. If Portia be the beauty of *Merchant of Venice*, Shylock is its strength. Elucidate the comparison by delineating the character of Portia and Shylock.

16. Reproduce Shakespeare's reflections on *music* and *mercy*.

17. What opposite views have been taken of the 'moral temper' of *Merchant of Venice*?

18. Describe the trial scene exhibiting Portia's character as brought out in it.

19. Describe Portia's suitors.

20. What faults are ascribed to Gratiano? What part does he play in the trial scene?

21. Relate the story of the caskets. How far does it seem to you to impede the development of the plot.

22. What was the value of silver compared with gold when this play was written?

23. Quote an allusion to palmistry from this play.

24. Show that in Shakespeare's time men dined with their hats on.

कृपया इस ग्रन्थको निम्नांकित तिथि पर या उसके पूर्व लौटा दें। विलम्वसे लौटानेपर ५ पैसे प्रतिदिन दण्ड देना होगा।

श्री गणेश वर्णी दि. जैन [illegible]
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